

vision: 2020 **VISION: 2020**

Statewide Transportation Policy Plan



State of Alaska
Department of Transportation
and Public Facilities

November 2002

VISION: 2020

Statewide Transportation Policy Plan



Prepared by the:
Division of Statewide Planning
with assistance from Regional Planning Offices
Alaska Department of Transportation and
Public Facilities

November 2002



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introduction

INTRODUCTION

This is Section Three of the update to *Vision: 2020*, Alaska's long-range transportation policy plan. Public comments have been a primary force in shaping the policies and objectives in the *Vision: 2020* Update. This section of the Plan presents the comments we have received from the public concerning policy. The comments demonstrate the great diversity of opinion among Alaskans. Many creative ideas were offered about the future of transportation in the state. We used these comments in drafting the policies presented in Section One. Other factors that have influenced the department in drafting the policies and objectives are found in Section Two—Resources/Background.

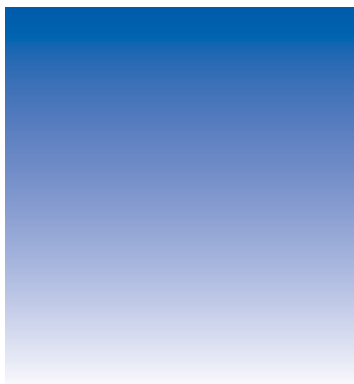
Comments about transportation policy included in this section extend back to early 1996. That year, the department began the process of improving its public involvement procedure (PIP) for planning. Along with comments about the PIP, many Alaskans added comments about what transportation policies they favored. The PIP called for use of a Public Review Group that would be involved early, pro-actively, and continuously in updating the plan. All citizens were invited to join this group and nearly 600 accepted the invitation.

Ideas from the Public Review Group were used by a second citizen group—an appointed 24-member Policy Advisory Committee—to develop policy themes at a September 1996 meeting in Anchorage. These policy themes were published in the December 1996 project newsletter. The Policy Advisory Committee met again in February 1997 to hammer out draft policies, which were published in the *Call for Ideas* in March 1997. A statewide live radio call-in program on the Alaska Public Radio Network was held in February, 1997, in which the Commissioner, the Statewide Planning Director, and the *Vision: 2020* project manager answered the public's questions live and listened to the public's comments. Responses to the *Call* received by the department at public meetings in communities around the state in the spring of 1997 and at the department's booth at the Alaska State Fair in 1997, 1998, and 1999 provided most of the remaining comments. All comments were used by the department, in combination with the technical analyses in Section Two, to draft the policies and objectives in Section One.

Policy Advisory Committee Members appointed in 1996

Carl Benson, *Fairbanks*
Jerie Best, *Alaska Independent Living Council, Soldotna*
Tom Brooks, *Alaska Railroad Corporation, Anchorage*
Linda Cyra-Korsgaard, *Anchorage*
Earl Finkler, *North Slope Borough*
Joe Graham, *Port Director, Juneau*
David Haugen, *Lynden, Inc., Anchorage*
Austin Helmers, *Wasilla*
Beryl Johnson, *Anchorage*
Ralph Kibby, *City and Borough of Juneau*
Art Koeninger, *Chitina*

Tina Lindgren, *Alaska Visitors Association, Anchorage*
Larry Merculief, *St. Paul*
Jeff Meucci, *Petersburg*
Clark Milne, *Fairbanks*
Don Moore, *Matanuska-Susitna Borough*
Matthew Nicolai, *Calista Corporation*
Walter Parker, *Anchorage*
Kim Ross, *Alaska Air Carriers Association*
Sheila Selkregg, *Municipality of Anchorage*
Larry Shelver, *Yutana Barge Lines*
Frank Stein, *Northwest Arctic Borough*
Keith Tryck, *Girdwood*
Nancy Webb, *Fairbanks North Star Borough*



The draft plan was published in the spring of 2002 in three sections: Section One – Policies; Section Two – Background/Resource Papers; Section Three – Public Comments. A questionnaire survey was distributed with the draft plan to elicit public comments. A press release and the fifth edition of the project newsletter announced its availability for a 90-day public review period. The plan was posted on the department's website as well. A statewide radio call-in program on the draft plan aired on the Alaska Public Radio Network in May, 2002. Posters were mailed to all rural villages announcing the call-in program. A public meeting on the draft plan was held in Anchorage in April.

The first part of this section presents public comments received on the draft plan, along with the department's reply in some cases. These comments are organized in order of date received by the department. The second part presents all public comments on policy received prior to the draft plan organized by issue. Comments received on specific projects were forwarded to the appropriate regional office and are not included here. Some comments are complex and are listed by more than one issue. All comments made it possible for the department to understand and take into account public concerns and possible solutions.



comments

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT PLAN

letters LETTERS

Listed below are individuals who submitted written comments on the draft Statewide Transportation Policy Plan and replies by DOT/PF when provided. Letters are listed in the order received. Click the name to view the letter and click the back arrow to return here.

1. [Jim Cushing](#)
2. [Norbert Chowaniec, Jr.](#)
3. [Cheryl Ogren, City of McGrath](#)
4. [DOT/PF Reply to Cheryl Ogren](#)
5. [Jay C. Bush, Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education](#)
6. [K.A. Swiger, Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce](#)
7. [Steve Borell, Alaska Miners Association, Inc.](#)
8. [Richard Cattanach, Associated General Contractors of Alaska](#)
9. [Kay Brown, Dave Lacey, Frankie Pillifant and Cheryl Richardson, Alaska Citizens Transportation Coalition](#)
10. [Chip Dennerlein, Alaska Department of Fish & Game](#)
11. [Joyce Levine](#)
12. [DOT/PF Reply to Joyce Levine](#)
13. [Dana L. Olson](#)
14. [Dennis Dooley](#)
15. [DOT/PF Reply to Dennis Dooley](#)
16. [Dan and Janet Kennedy, Kennedy & Co., LLC](#)
17. [Survey Questionnaire by Dale Bagley, Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor](#)
18. [DOT/PF Reply to Dale Bagley](#)

responses SURVEY RESPONSES

The public was encouraged to respond to the proposed policies and objectives in the draft policy plan through a questionnaire that was distributed with the draft plan. The following is a compilation of the survey questions and the responses received. References are to draft policies as presented in the draft plan.



1. Should other policies be added? Should any be deleted? How will these changes help transportation in Alaska?

Respondent 1: More needs to be done in the rural areas that have no transportation or much less to go to road construction, marine highways and harbors. We cannot improve on what we don't have.

Respondent 2: Policy 3 and 13 need to incorporate restroom facilities!

Respondent 5: Delete environmental policies. Be realistic towards development and take away excessive costs due to environmental fallacies.

Respondent 7: There needs to be no addition to the policies proposed except one to improve roads and sanitation systems in rural Alaska. This would provide better health prevention in rural communities.

Respondent 8: The policies that have been identified are sufficient to reach a realistic long-term goal of efficient, coordinated transportation throughout Alaska. The ideas/comments of planners/citizens involved in the planning process have been good ones. I fear if "you" continue to "tweak" the plan – it will never be completed. I agree with the comment in this document – "pick a plan and stay with it."

Respondent 9: Implement the bicycle trails/pedestrian paths into every future road project.

Respondent 11:

- #1, p. 13 – Fund transit operations not just capital improvements in the 13th bullet with highway transfer dollars.

- #8 – Mention public mobility also in #10.

- #12 – Help provide ADA compliant community transportation. Good mention of participation with Alaska Mobility Coalition.

Respondent 12: Please dispense with the hyperbole. Just maintain what roads we have. The City of Anchorage is a disgrace with snow removal, etc. Large sections of the state are absolutely dangerous – no shoulders, i.e. Richardson Highway, Tok Cut Off!!! Be realistic!

Respondent 13: Pave or blacktop – save on maintenance.

Respondent 14: Backup transportation during major disasters is not addressed – at least clearly.

Respondent 15: Don't pave Denali Highway. Do not upgrade McCarthy Road. It is a waste of limited resources \$. Drop the idea of a scenic highway on any part of the Richardson Highway.

Respondent 17:

1. Amend System Character, Opportunity by changing "or" to an "and."
2. Amend Economic Development, New Access by deleting "only" and "compelling."
3. Amend Livability, Impacts to read "Strive to preserve the natural beauty of the state, limit the negative environmental, social, economic, and human health impacts and enhance the positive environmental, social, economic and human health attributes of transportation improvements."
4. Add a new policy that reads: "Jobs. Through access to resources enhance oppor-



Department of Community and Economic Development

Cold Bay

tunities for diverse employment from trapping and fishing to industrial and service jobs.”

5. Add a new policy that reads “Unity. Bring the state’s people together through convenient transportation and provide to all Alaskan more opportunities for access to education, health care, jobs and other services.” Michael T. Cook.

Respondent 18: DOT is not listening to local communities. The City of Wasilla has stated that the community does not want frontage roads through the city of Wasilla. DOT ignores this request. The current DOT Parks Highway design will choke economic development.

Respondent 19: More roads!



2. Should any of the policies be modified in some way? How will these changes help transportation in Alaska?

Respondent 1: Don’t give the DOT/PF so much power and stop them from spending money unwisely on airstrips like Chitina and Lake Louise. What a waste of money.

Respondent 3: The PEB [Project Evaluation Board] needs to have public notice and the public needs to be able to attend PEB meetings. PEB should have members of public on it. Projects put on STIP [Statewide Transportation Improvements Program] should not be taken off by PEB without notice and vice versa.

Respondent 5: Delete environmental policies to lower the costs of road building in the state. Get real! The whole state is a wetland.

Respondent 6: I would like to see more detailed involvement of communities affected. City/Tribal governments should be equal with the state in the planning process.

Respondent 7: No modifications needed but better airports with runway lights are needed especially in rural Alaska. Provide rotating lights for direction finding, especially in village airports, especially in bad weather.

Respondent 8: Again, the DOT/PF now has established a reasonable set of policies, goals, and objectives. The public has been actively involved and listened to. Stick with what “you” have and begin implementation.

Respondent 9: Make sure we have trails/paths so citizens and visitors have a safe way of getting around. This will also help energy savings.

Respondent 10: Under Economic Development – “compelling” needs a definition or be deleted to give planners an idea what it means to a new route.

Respondent 11: As Alaska develops, community-appropriate transit becomes even more important, and small systems cannot maintain adequate services without a lot of help.

Respondent 13: Less dust.

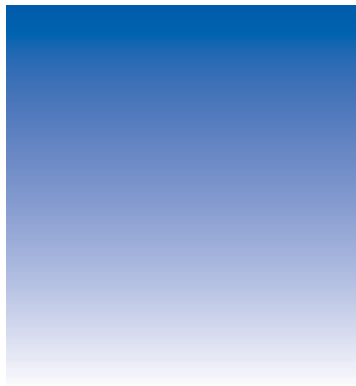
Respondent 18: Transportation means everything for private sector economic stability.

Respondent 19: More roads!



Blue Heron

Department of Community and Economic Development



3. Are the objectives clear and effective enough? Can you suggest changes (deletions, additions, or revisions)?

Respondent 4: I like the plan and its objectives. What I don't see at present is these objectives being followed. Seems to me the state wastes a lot of money on programs and projects the public does not want or support, i.e. Denali Highway paving, road to Cordova, McCarthy Road upgrade. These projects are all currently held up, but only because of organized public pressure not because of DOT/PF. I'd like to see the livability section followed.

Respondent 5: Delete environmental policies. Extreme environmentalism has clouded the fact that even enviro-nazis like to drive cars on roads.

Respondent 7: The objectives are clear enough and no changes, deletions, additions or revisions are needed.

Respondent 8: I would not change anything that has been presented in the subject document. The objectives are clear and realistic. And more importantly, ripe for implementation.

Respondent 9: Use federal matching funds for trails/bike paths.

Respondent 11: See #1 above [Question #1, comment by Respondent #11]. Sections are not clearly defined, so policy numbers start over – Is the first section overall Alaska policies and the second section the planning factor analysis? Could use a clear division or explanation.

Respondent 13: Clear as the new fallen snow.

Respondent 18: Please carefully read the attached article. We ask that the article become part of the public record. [Click here](#) to view the referenced article.

4. Do you have other comments on any aspect of this draft plan?

Respondent 1: Hire companies to work on our highways whose work holds up longer than a few months.

Respondent 2: I realize we have a billboard law; we still need to address "signage" and location, i.e. permitted, private property, in and out of right-of-way, rented, etc.!

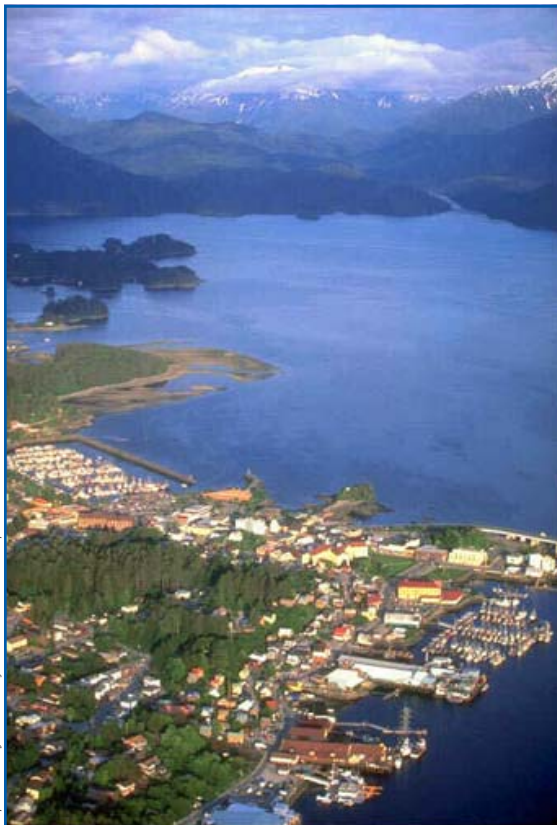
Respondent 5: Build some more highways across the state.

Respondent 6: Aside from the above I think that it is good. [Refer to comments by Respondent 6 to previous questions.]

Respondent 7: Yes, on construction projects in rural Alaska, the State of Alaska should consult with the people who have lived within the region. Instead of relying on the architects or contractors who are awarded contracts, as well as on maintenance.

Respondent 8: Keep the public involved in the planning process. Listen to local concerns and give them serious consideration. With dwindling oil revenues and declining fisheries, it is vitally important that the implemented plan(s) support economic development and the opening of western Alaska to opportunities for all State residents. Insure those transportation projects with economic development as a goal is truly needed; and effectively/efficiently planned for.

Respondent 9: Can't emphasize enough – we need more trails and bike paths.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Aerial view of Sitka

Respondent 11: Lots of compiled information, and a lot of work, but not easy to see the big picture and put recommendations and comments into categories that group common issues, to make sense of the whole pot of ideas.

Respondent 16: I would rather have the Ninilchik DOT/PF station open than this draft plan. Dale L. Bagley, Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor.

Respondent 18: The entire plan is an expansion of the DOT bureaucracy. It is a CYA document that is a waste of resources.

Respondent 19: More roads!



comments RADIO CALL-IN COMMENTS

Deputy Commissioner Kurt Parkan and Statewide Planning Director Tom Brigham replied to questions and comments about the draft Statewide Transportation Policy Plan during a live radio call-in show over the Alaska Public Radio Network on May 7, 2002. DOT/PF area transportation planners contacted callers who were not able to present their questions during the radio program.

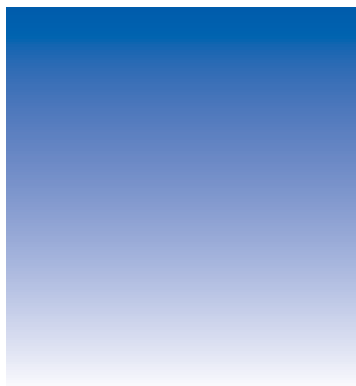
Issues raised on the radio program or through the calls returned by DOT/PF planners are summarized below by the caller's area of residence when known.

ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA

- Commented that the DOT/PF uses substandard asphalt and that is why roads are falling apart. The Coastal trail alignment at the toe and top of the bluff will not work. Put the trail way out on the beach. Use federal, not state, money on the trail.
- Expressed concern about non-existent, substandard (narrow), or poorly maintained sidewalks in Anchorage. The situation is dangerous for those who walk or use the bus system. The ferry system is a good way to get to the bush and keep nature in tact. Ferry service is better than developing roads especially in the Tongass. Nature and pristine areas should be respected as much as possible.
- Commented that rumble strips between lanes are good, but should be painted. Rumble strips are needed on "C" Street.
- Recommended that light rail be developed in the Glenn Highway median and that high-density housing be developed in the vicinity of the Eagle River Bridge.
- Commented that DOT/PF seems to be a department of road construction and needs to focus more on railroads, airports and harbors in the state. Increases in air emissions are a concern and should be considered in Anchorage and Fairbanks. Road ownership is confusing in the Municipality of Anchorage and residents do not know whom to contact when a road is owned by one entity but maintained by another.

FAIRBANKS METROPOLITAN AREA

- Suggested that the Policy Advisory Committee for the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan consider the appropriateness of policies that were developed four years ago. Specific examples referenced included TRAAK Board effectiveness and the effectiveness of the public process. Provide handouts for citizens on how to get involved.



SOUTHWEST

- Supported development of the north to south road linkage identified in the Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan to provide Alumna Lake communities access to the deep-water port at Chignik. There are problems in communities due to the high cost of fuel and the lack of ground access to ports served by the state's ferry system. DOT/PF should use the military to help with infrastructure development projects. (Dillingham)
- Supported construction of railroads over new highways. (Dillingham)

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM

- Inquired about asphalt recycling and said that Hangar Lake Road and East Avenue in Bethel need to be paved. Both roads experience lots of traffic.
- Inquired about the status of the Memorandum of Agreement for the Tundra Ridge Road project and offered to contact a local Assembly member to get the agreement moving. (Bethel)



Department of Community & Economic Development

King Cove boardwalk

- Said that improvements to barge landing sites in the Kuskokwim area are needed. DOT/PF should build roads and large turnarounds at landing sights to allow users to unload cargo. (Bethel)
- Recommended solving budget problems on Yukon-Kuskokwim (Y-K) Delta jobs and stop importing gravel. Build roads on sawdust like they do in Canada. Develop plywood plants in the Y-K Delta to make plywood and float roads, etc.

KENAI PENINSULA

- Expressed concern about the lack of roads and poor road maintenance in Alaska compared to other states and suggested removing silt from the gravel to improve binding. (Homer)
- Wants to be involved in the Homer traffic light study and suggested that DOT/PF add right-turn lanes to Main, Lake, Pioneer and Heath Streets and opposed installing traffic lights. (Homer)
- Expressed concern that there are no alternate routes around Sterling/Soldotna and no connection between Nikiski and Swanson River Road. The connection between Nikiski, Swanson and River Road would be a good route in case of an emergency. (Sterling)

INTERIOR

- Commented that he did not want to see additional roads built but wanted to see more rest areas that are maintained. (Carlo Creek)
- Supported restricting use of the Parks Highway by trucks and suggested shipping freight on the railroad instead. Opposed expansion of the highway system. The lack of roads makes Alaska unique. (Talkeetna)

SOUTHEAST

- Commented that the recently chip-sealed road to Hollis is falling to pieces. Favored the Ketchikan-Hollis Inter-island Ferry Authority and Gravina access. The road to

Hydaburg is narrow, winding and dangerous. The Hydaburg Road was designed to be wider than it was constructed. (Hydaburg)

- Commented that the Alaska Marine Highway System does not present how it decides to allocate operating resources and that it appears that priority is given to visitors and that resident needs are an after-thought. (Juneau)
- Commented that funding cutbacks will limit the ferry system. The AMHS is antiquated and driven by the visitor market rather than local needs. The state should develop more fast ferries and alternative transportation modes if roads are not going to link the smaller communities. Fast ferries should address the needs of local users and provide more consistent service. (Juneau)
- Commented that there is a lack of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Alaska and asked how citizens could get involved to change that. Communities should work together and speak with one voice to encourage DOT/PF to do the right thing. A bike/pedestrian coordinator position is needed in each region. (Sitka)



NORTHWEST

- Mentioned the need to get more people involved in village projects. Deering's road is a low priority to the state. Wanted to know why Hydaburg got a road when Deering did not. (Deering)

LOCATION OF CALLER UNKNOWN

- Expressed appreciation and support for the DOT/PF policy to incorporate bike and pedestrian facilities into road projects. The policy should be extended to create pedestrian bridges along popular fishing streams on the highway and cited an example of a child that was killed on a highway near a stream.
- Said that when lane lines are covered with snow, people do not drive in the proper lanes - especially on curves. Design curves like people drive them.
- Said that paint wears off with studded tires and recommended a ban on studded tires or charge people who use studded tires to pay for road repairs caused by them.
- Commented that pedestrian accommodations should be included in all projects. Reduce the speed limit on any road or highway with an attached sidewalk. Use jersey barriers between curbs and attached sidewalks. People should not have to walk on the shoulder.
- Expand Alaska's highways to Northwest and Southwest Alaska.



comments

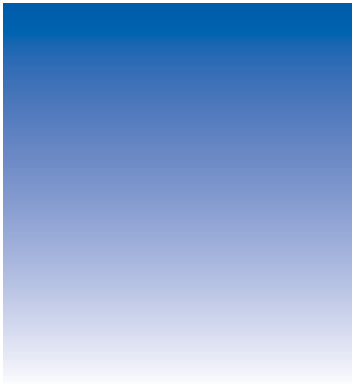
COMMENTS RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE DRAFT PLAN

This section presents all public comments on policy received prior to the draft plan. The comments are organized by the following issues: Process, Values, and Systems.

process PROCESS

TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING

- Discuss the Pavement Management System in *Vision: 2020*. Dedicate resources every year for the PMS. Annually set aside money for maintenance.
- I am so upset with DOT that I am just about not ready to work with the department any more on anything.
- Involve “local” Alaskans and “impacted” individuals. Individuals feel unimportant.
- I am frustrated about the seemingly endless succession of plans, programs and changes in administrative priorities.
- More credit should be given for local contributions to project development.
- Having small communities donate right-of-way and perform maintenance is WRONG! This scoring criteria hurts rural areas. Material donation criterion is bad also. These issues must be resolved in order to have a system that prioritizes projects on need rather than saddle local communities with burdens they cannot perform.
- Change state’s “lock up” attitude by current administration.
- Clarify the process. (Is it DOT or the TRAAK board which selects new TRAAK/ISTEA proposals for funding?) Maybe the TRAAK Board should have a public involvement process.
- Would like to know how, when and by whom specific requirements are set.
- Increase proportion of resources dedicated to programming and planning.
- A needs assessment process should be established at local and regional areas of state— should be goal oriented.
- Politics appear to have a major impact on project priority.
- Make clear the aspects of decision-making that public can influence.
- My ongoing concern is that there is a balance between sound administrative policy/decision making and public input/opinion.
- In long-range planning for rural Alaska, there should be rural Alaskan representation at policy level.



- The department has little credibility due to the movement of projects in and out of the STIP every year. The department needs to do what they say they will do. Leave the STIP alone for a while.
- The “pre-plan”, “draft plan”, and “final plan” planning sequence may appear to add more paperwork to a long, red-taped process. Is there a way to incorporate public concerns while making the planning process more efficient?
- Do the planning and scoping studies along with other public agencies to provide need infrastructure for industry.
- Changing priorities: the priority of projects changes every year in DOT&PF documents. Why do projects float in and out of the spending plan?
- Make decision making process more consistent, easier to understand and accessible.
- Roads that will benefit economic development in rural areas should rank higher in evaluation scheme.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Hughes

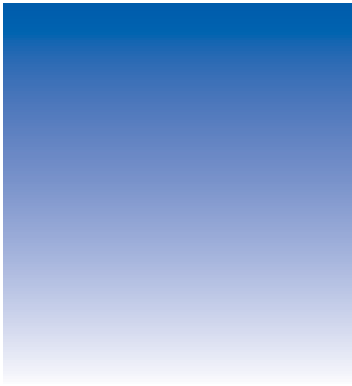
- Reduce the changes in project priority from year to year.
- Eliminate good-ole-boy network with behind-the-scenes decision-making.
- The process is continually changing, with new procedures and new priorities every time there is a change in commissioners.
- To us it appears that you made some of your decisions according to the requests of certain individuals without any thought of what was best for the majority, in other words which streets are used the most and need repairing the most.
- Process too slow.
- Your agency people should talk more to each other. Also within an agency there should be more communication.
- Project Evaluation Board ranking should be done in public. Eliminate closed door ranking meetings.
- No more behind-the-scenes meetings that result in sudden changes in project status, i.e., new road to the Yukon River.
- I think that DOT/PF does not think in terms of cost-effectiveness and spends too much federal money. I would rather have the money go back than wasted. Also, its first priority is to be able to fund its positions.
- Why can't the public involvement for projects be similar to the PIP for the Statewide Plan (i.e., proactive, two-way forums)?
- The in-kind contribution criteria places the poorest communities at a distinct disadvantage to those communities with more resources. The amended criteria have increased the weight of this factor from three to four. We object and suggest it be deleted altogether.
- A uniform statewide Force Account Policy should be developed. This would allow local governments to build their infrastructure, villages to hire and train their own workforce, local economies are infused with cash; project control remains with local government.
- Not enough planning or research is being conducted before a project is funded.
- Alaska needs a Transportation Commission appointed with staggered terms.

- States should prioritize major new projects and see them through, or disapproved, then move on to number two, etc.
- I think when this process is completed, that individual score sheets should be required to be turned in. The evaluators should be a wide diversity of people, not picked to throw the scores in one direction.
- When projects are evaluated, I have noticed that after the evaluators are finished, those in higher positions who didn't like the ranking adjusted the figures to get the project's score higher (their projects they wanted funded).
- Once a project enters the design phase it should be committed through the construction phase. This assumes insurmountable obstacles or excessive costs are not discovered during design. It is a terrible waste to design a project and then change the priorities so that is not constructed. This change will give the program more consistency.
- A stable, meaningful plan that transcends the political objectives of any particular administration.
- Delay of village projects. When transportation costs go up from the original project estimate, the department is constrained by the original scope. DOT can't "skinny up" the road to fit it within the original cost estimate. FHWA says we have to do what we said we would do. We therefore must find more money or the project gets delayed. That's one reason why village projects are more often delayed. Public in rural villages object to projects being delayed like this.
- Need greater flexibility to tackle needed improvements when and if the opportunity presents itself, without waiting for the next STIP cycle. This should be aimed at making the most economical use of state funds available.
- When a natural disaster causes extensive highway damage on a road for which a bike trail alongside is planned to start building in the following year or two, why not build the bike trail concurrent with your emergency road reconstruction? This will save transportation \$\$, particularly if you can use FEMA \$\$ to fund the entire project.
- It is very helpful, when putting together a program, to have a consistent evaluation process and criteria. The state has made tremendous improvements in stabilizing this process over the last few years.
- Would rather not bother DOT with complaints; would much prefer to see things done professionally and call once in a while to let DOT know what a great job it's doing. Hopes DOT will give me the opportunity before I retire.
- Keep up the good work!
- Many of the Policy "Themes" overlap and I think the list could be reduced to ten-twelve "themes".
- I see no other needs.
- Purpose and Need for projects should come out of planning process. P & N should be well established and NEPA approvable. This would sort wheat from chaff.
- Simplify permit procedures, and shorten time for approval of permits.
- Include M&O costs estimate in planning for projects. Now being done at NEPA level, but not at planning level. Stop projects that can't be sustained with current lack of M&O money.



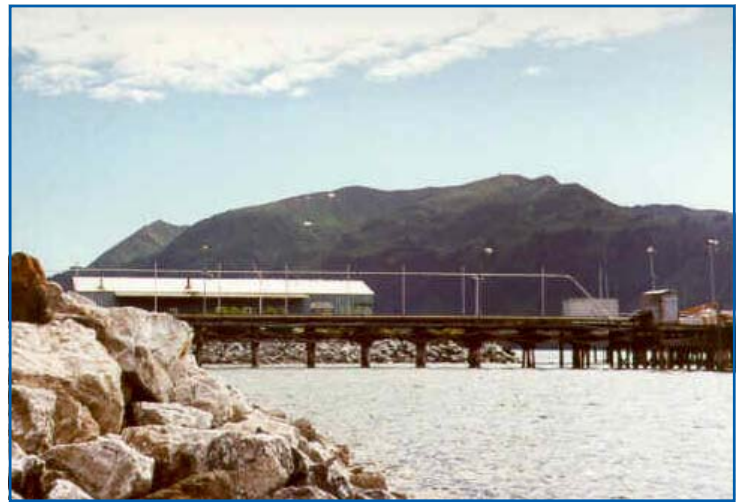
Wales

Department of Community and Economic Development



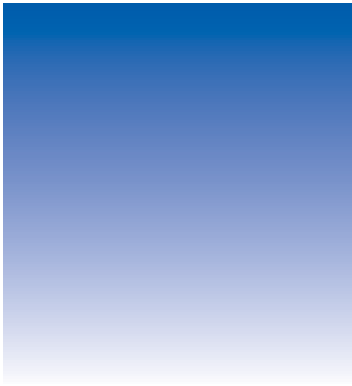
- Kodiak and Prince William Sound are too far apart to be joined in any study.
- Very disappointed in the STIP plan and what Seward may see and has seen in the last five years.
- Regarding DOT's policy of asking villages for capital contributions for projects. Essentially DOT wants free gravel and free Right-of-Way, often from the corporation who owns the land. DOT doesn't expect to get free materials and ROW in urban areas; why expect this in villages?
- Whenever transportation alternatives are being evaluated, a "score card" should be included to show the amount of money that goes into construction as compared to other purposes. This will provide a running comparison of effectiveness of the process.
- Alaska Coastal Management Plan process works well.
- Long-term planning is important and very helpful for the villages.
- Long-range transportation planning for this area is very important. The state owns a lot of land on the Seward Peninsula, as does the Bering Straits Native Corporation. There are basic land issues that must be addressed in a long-range plan. Bering Straits Regional Corporation continues to actively explore mining development.
- There's a need for a regional long-range transportation study. This could address the need for a deep-water port in Kotzebue and the Kotzebue airport relocation. Initial financing of a port study could come from: AIDEA, the state, or NANA Regional Corporation could go after funding.
- Coordination among lots of agencies is needed.
- We need to move from our present situation of responding to egregious current needs to one of anticipating future needs. We're always a day late and a dollar short.
- Integrated planning should also involve the builders and maintainers in the design phase. Such an approach helps anticipate needs and problems so they can be treated in the design.
- Consistency-continuity of projects-waste of money by dropping previously approved items or having to re-score because of a new cycle or change in criteria.
- STIP process. It's hard to get a piece of paper (a project nomination form) out of a village. Village projects score so low that they're not going to be in the STIP.
- It is very important that the long-range plan reflect the actual amount of funding that can be anticipated from the Federal-Aid Programs.
- You spend money on streets/roads that to the public look perfectly fine and leave those that are in very bad condition. Why?
- Every plan being evaluated should include an evaluation of logging roads. The public should help ensure that all logging roads are retained after logging is completed. This will provide alternatives for the tourists and access for mineral exploration.
- DOT's giving priority to projects in the STIP process where gravel, right-of-way, etc. are contributed by locals. The corporation owns the land. They can't give up their assets; they're a for-profit corporation. They would not be serving their shareholders if they gave away assets.
- Involve "users" in the prioritization process. If the users have to help pay the cost then frivolous projects may be of less priority.
- Minerals, oil & gas, tourism & forestry should be specifically and separately addressed in the documents.

- Let villages handle their own projects.
- Develop a way to prioritize projects relative to a community. In many rural communities one new road could greatly enhance the quality and comfort of life compared to several new roads in metropolis areas.
- We need a stable, consistent and predictable process to allocate scarce resources.
- Decide where access improvements are beneficial, and where they are not.
- Priority should be given to airports that are presently serving scheduled air carriers rather than just general aviation.
- Regulation could address the question of arterial collector and local roads and streets. Some of the facilities are not correctly classified. The present system doesn't seem to allow public input into the classification.
- Suggest the following ranking to assist in weighing projects: 1) Intercommunity projects 150 percent of the total, 2) Industrial projects 100 percent, 3) Local Projects 50 percent. Roads that are strictly for recreation or primarily for recreational use should have a lower point count than an industrial use road or an intercommunity road or airport.
- This document (*Call for Ideas*) exemplifies what I have in mind when I vote to cut government waste and duplication. I find only 10 of the 55 pages in the document (pp.19 –29) to be useful in a planning exercise. Actually, the fold out map isn't bad.
- Existing systems management and financing. Financial planning for long-range needs.
- Think and plan laterally — look beyond transportation projects to power, water, sewer, and other projects to see where there may be mutual benefit to share costs and achieve ends.
- We need to develop a comprehensive road plan: one that links all areas of the state. We need to designate transportation corridors/rights-of-way now, and start ROW acquisition early.
- AMATS-identified STIP projects may slip through when evaluated by the statewide criteria.
- Require land managers and DOT to develop a plan of action for legal designation of trails.
 - a) Establish baseline to measure bike/pedestrian use;
 - b) Provide incentives for bike/pedestrian use;
 - c) Develop policy on access to public lands in cooperation with other agencies.
- Need more good planning.
- Your book's too long. Waste trees—study to death.
- Need increased focus on docks, harbors, airstrips, and trails, less on roads.
- We better concentrate on basic need rather than recreation.
- I think we need an area plan for Prince of Wales. The whole system doesn't seem to work very well. Even the state seems to have poor coordination among the state agencies. The Department of Natural Resources is trying to manage large amounts of state lands. The Department of Community and Regional Affairs would be a player in



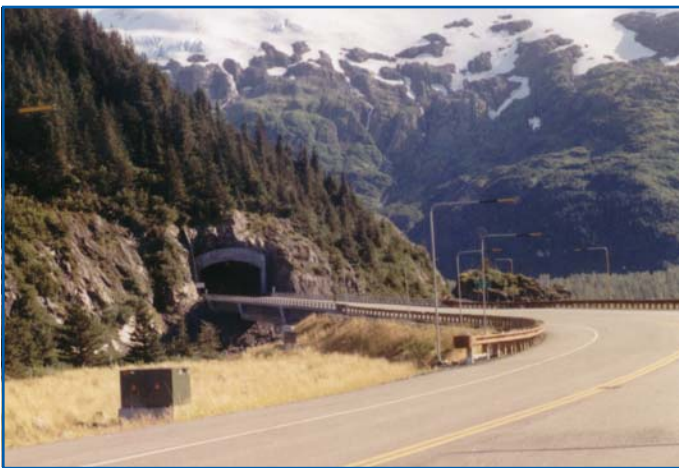
Seldovia dock

Department of Community and Economic Development



this as they work with the communities, even the unincorporated ones such as Whale Pass.

- Policies: Develop a pavement policy. Develop a highway policy. Perhaps you need to get out of local road building and maintenance and develop a highway policy that emphasizes inter- rather than intra-community highways.
- The number one thing that the department needs to do is adopt regulation. Presently by statute your responsibilities appear to be unnecessarily broad. There is no difference between keeping inventories, adopting building standards and getting to the heart of the matter regarding inter-community transportation facilities. There doesn't appear to be sufficient differentiation between inter- and intra-community transportation projects. The statutes suggest you adopt regulations to make specific duties.
- Your emphasis should be on inter-community links. You should not be constructing, maintaining or funding subdivision streets or local trails, or they should be very low priority.



Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

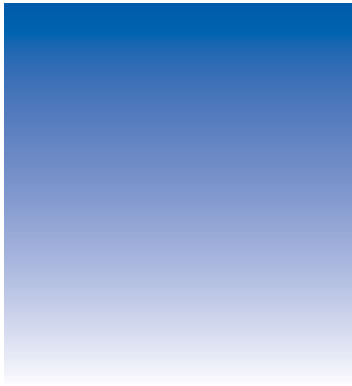
Tunnel on Portage Glacier Highway

- Implementation of policy is the important part, not just the stating of a policy. If the public is charged for something they don't use, there will be a public reaction.
- In DOT's capital improvements, the biggest priority projects aren't being addressed.
- I believe that an opinion in the public comment section was made by the department. I suggest that DOT marks public comments more clearly in the document as coming from the public.
- Consultants need to be held accountable. Now there's nobody to be accountable to.
- Policies in Alaska need to be different from U.S. The feds recognize that Alaska is not like the lower 48.

- DOT should be able to do an Environmental Impact Statement for \$100,000. Let the other agencies tell DOT what's wrong.
- The *Call for Ideas* is really good; it provided background information on funding.
- I support needs-based assessment of projects rather than decisions made by politics. I am concerned about statewide assessment of projects viz a viz Mat-Su's needs. The economic and demographic project in the *Call for Ideas* shows that Mat-Su is the fastest growing area in the state.
- Need planning due to increase in traffic. Need emergency procedures for massive traffic tie-ups. There needs to be a way to fast track emergency projects as needed. Need flexibility to do adjustments as needed.
- In the Project Evaluation Criteria for projects, factor (5) Community M&O contribution and factor (6) Local Capital contribution should be deleted altogether. These standards are favorable to communities with significant resources. Areas with little income have difficulty competing. The rich get richer and the poorer get nothing.
- The present selection processes based on inventory and condition surveys, interaction between local, state and federal agencies, involvement of politician, citizens and bureaucrats are sufficient and cost-effective.
- The state should take the initiative to develop a rural equivalent to a Metropolitan Planning Organization so rural communities and Tribal governments will also have a seat at the table to voice their unique concerns.

- There isn't any way to remove the "human element" from the decision-making process.
- Your weight on erosion in the project evaluation criteria is too low. We recommend the weight on erosion to be five. In the future this will prevent projects from being a wasted effort.
- The makeup of the Policy Advisory Committee for *Vision: 2020* is such that the actual users of the State Transportation System are grossly under-represented. The Public Review Group might not necessarily reflect the view of the public as a whole.
- Economic development and public safety considerations should be afforded much greater weight for rural road projects.
- DOT should clearly explain how it saves resources in the long term to pave unpaved roads.
- The amended project evaluation criterion for remote roads and trails increases Health & Quality of Life (Access to Basic Necessities) from a weight of three to that of four. We agree that this is a step in the right direction but it should have a weight of five.
- The evaluation criteria for local contribution of land and/or resources should be eliminated for rural aviation, road and street projects.
- What we lack in planning, if anything, is a multi-modal transportation strategy so we know how air, surface, and marine transportation projects should inter-relate.
- In the aviation project ranking criteria, erosion control should have more weight than a factor of two. If a community loses a runway generally they lose their only transportation link.
- Any public participation process should include access to the state's largest transportation system (AMATS). This could be through a joint effort or, since DOT has significant representation on AMATS, as an advisory to those DOT representatives.
- A standard for erosion/flooding is missing from the Rural and Urban Streets and Roads project evaluation criteria. Flooding and erosion result in significant impacts to roads and other public transportation facilities within the Kenai Peninsula Borough.
- Suggest consideration be given to non-DOT representation on the Project Evaluation Board. Outside perspectives on transportation projects would broaden the state's view of such projects and provide input from local and regional users.
- We believe there was more intended latitude for the use of enhancement money than has been reflected in the planning process and particularly in the public involvement part of the planning process.
- We recommend that the ranking on Health and Quality of Life in the project evaluation criteria be raised to five. Having access to these sites will help keep our villages safe from hazardous waste and prevent health dangers.
- The local road construction industry needs to have a sustainable level of work on a year to year basis in order to survive. If projects for one particular region are deferred to the third year on the STIP, businesses may be affected.
- Members of the Fairbanks community have expressed a concern that the Northern Region is being shortchanged on its share of road construction projects.
- We need to come to some agreement to try and balance the statewide transportation needs with the needs of communities to have a predictable level of projects each year.
- Project Evaluation Criteria should incorporate community values.
- What is the rationale for allocating funds between the National Highway System, the





Community Transportation Program, and the TRAAK program? Who decides and how is it decided what percentage of funds goes to each program? Public input is a critical element in this decision making process.

- With the current level of deterioration of our roads and bridges and shrinking Federal participation, how can we afford to spend \$8,000,000 each year for planning? More is needed on engineering solutions to our unique Alaska road maintenance problems.
- The four surface transportation categories make fair distribution of funds difficult because projects compete with each other in not just one program, but four separate categories. A formula based on “points” alone cannot work.
- Aviation and rural/urban road criteria rewarding local contribution of land and/or resources should be eliminated. Rural communities often have no land base from which land can be donated and rarely own construction materials for a transportation project.



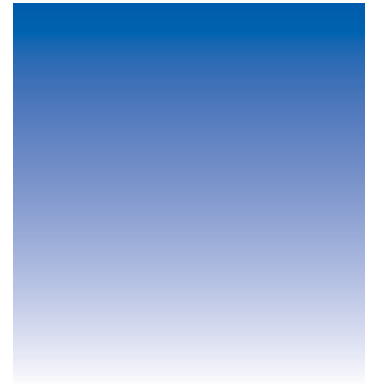
Sand Point airport

- Project evaluation criteria that virtually require the community to donate construction materials and/or land owned by someone else in order to receive a greatly needed transportation facility place an unfair burden on the community and pit it against their own ANCSA corporation. ANSCA village and regional corporation, which own land and construction materials, are profit making corporations under state and federal law, not social service organizations.
- DOT should use teams to plan, develop, design and construct projects. Teams should include planners, landscape architects, engineers, maintenance personnel, police, emergency personnel, and the public, and particularly the “silent majority” who are the major users and would expect to benefit from future improvement projects.
- The Public Review Group for *Vision: 2020* could easily be stacked with representatives of groups who oppose most system improvements, particularly for private vehicles and commercial transport.
- There is no requirement that the professional staff act as ombudsmen for the silent majority to insure that the Public Review Group will not be skewed against the wishes of the actual and total public.
- The process of ranking projects on a statewide basis concerns me. How does the director of the Alaska Marine Highway System adequately evaluate a road project in the northern region during Project Evaluation Board scoring? I am skeptical that this will ever be a truly “objective” exercise.
- We should use the available funds, not for more misguided, excessive planning, but where they are needed most: in better designs and in quality products to minimize maintenance expenditures and enhance operations.

- The issues that seem to be a continuing priority at the department, transit and trails, are rarely if ever spoken about in our dealing with people who have concerns over transportation and the future of Alaska.
- DOT & PF’s focus seems to be almost exclusively centered on expanding bicycle and pedestrian trails.
- The weight on runway length in the aviation project evaluation criteria should be five. The expansion of our runway would allow material to be flown in instead of depending on erratic barge carriers as our only hope.
- I support the relatively high weights on the aviation project evaluation criteria for

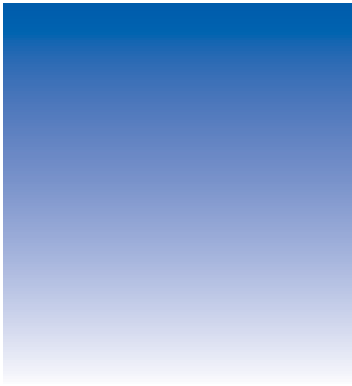
safety, health and quality of life, and economic benefits. These same criteria are not weighed as high for rural/urban streets and roads.

- DOT should assess the full costs of its transportation system including the emergency costs, troopers, air and water pollution and land use impacts. This information should be included with the first chapter of the Statewide Transportation Plan and in each Transportation Improvement Plan.
- DOT should assess and compare the costs of various modes to move people and goods, including construction, operation, maintenance, emergency, enforcement, health, safety, and environmental.
- There is no guidance or information in the proposed plans on how funds might be allocated between various categories, any priority between categories, or how AMATS is integrated into the system.
- Planning documents need to acknowledge and incorporate federal language and programs designed to improve air quality and reduce environmental impacts of transportation.
- Without an economy that produces good jobs, quality of life issues are a moot point. We do not believe that you can separate jobs and the economy from transportation planning.
- Without the erosion/flooding standard in the project evaluation criteria, important local projects receive a low score when ranked. A weighting of five is recommended for this standard (see attached proposed draft of an erosion/flooding evaluation criteria standard).
- This does not take an elaborate planning process and a whole trainload of planners. It takes professionals who can work with elected officials and this does not preclude an open process that involves the public in a meaningful process.
- Since aviation is the only mode of access in the majority of rural communities, reliable and safe overland access to airports is critical to the prompt delivery of health care and thus should be accorded a higher evaluation score.
- Better planning: Some DOT&PF projects appear to have little foresight.
- DOT&PF officials said they anticipate upgrading certain highways in a few years because of increased traffic. Why didn't DOT&PF upgrade the road when major work was being done? The State DOT needs to come up with a policy regarding this issue and a plan of action.
- I would like to see more specific information in the *Vision: 2020* Statewide Transportation Plan. The plan should include information on upcoming road construction and upgrades. It should also include proposed or possible construction projects for the next five-ten years.
- Please develop a reasonable plan and stick with it. Multiple plans cause confusion. Dragging out the planning process is expensive and doesn't do anyone any good.
- Concentrate on the modes of transportation most used and preferred by the average Alaskan. Provide your best service during peak periods
- Err on the side of too little rather than too much—it can't be reversed!
- Heed and adopt the policies and ideas set forth in "more than Asphalt, Concrete, and Steel" so excellently presented in the U.S. Dept. of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration Publication No. FHWA-97-102-HEP 40/1-97 (20m)E.



Dalton Highway

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- Consider the problems of safety and access now present in “Glitter Gulch” in the Healy Canyon near the entrance to Denali National Park because of unrestricted development. Or the facilities now needed along the Dalton highway because it was opened to the public. Or the consequences in store because private vehicles will have road access into Whittier and Prince William Sound, replacing passenger train access.
- There are red flags in our present political climate, but so is “balancing the budget”. Consider carefully the consequences economically of the implementation of RS2477 routes our legislators in Juneau and Washington, D. C. are pushing.
- There is a dawning realization (for voters and DOT) that with roads can come unplanned, helter-skelter settlements, developments, and unplanned-for impacts. Then come requests for services that government agencies and the private sector aren’t prepared to fund. Highways dictate development and impacts as well as needed transportation routes.
- It is a terrible waste to design a project and then change the priorities so it is not constructed. This change will give the program more consistency.



Craig/Klawock road

- You waste too much paper in your plan packets.
- I did dare to skim to the White Statewide Transportation Plan booklet and discovered that the Federal Transit Administration is not mentioned. Is there no relationship between the FTA and the other systems mentioned in the plan? I would think that the vehicles made possible by the FTA would be an important element of your transportation plan. Just a thought . . .
- While you present comparative costs from prior to 1956 and now, it must be remembered they will bear the same relationship as between now and 2038, whatever that may be. Most comparisons of that length became erroneous due to mechanical and technical advances, i.e., the average five-year plan needs to be updated annually.

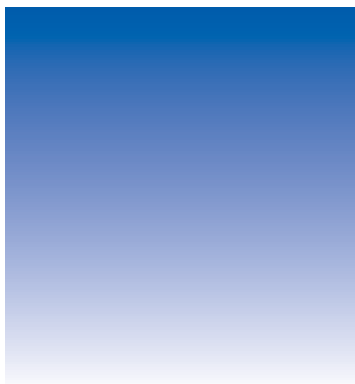
- Permanent Fund money should be used to fund projects, especially if the economy goes way down. Look ahead to what will be needed in five years or more.
- Project development: project selection criteria and alternatives should not be based solely on lowest cost alone. The best alternative may not be the least costly one. Should consider aesthetics and quality vs. quantity.
- Show Aviation Improvement Program criteria on graphic as well as STIP criteria affected by *Vision: 2020* policies.
- Don’t lump capital and M&O together in a policy statement.
- Consider origin and destination—for commuters, truckers and actual working force.
- Do a shorter stretch of road right, with enhancements. Quality, not quantity.
- The road system on Prince of Wales is not classified correctly. Major collectors should be arterials. Consider for National Highway System.
- Consult other departments (Department of Community and Regional Affairs for example) to determine what constitutes a community (size, etc).
- No focus, need transportation planning. Too much money spent on bicycles and pedestrians. Need to consider origins and destinations (Bike/pedestrian doesn’t get people to major places).
- Fairbanks Metropolitan Transportation Study (FMATS) is not mentioned in *Call for Ideas*.

- *Call for Ideas* is oriented around Anchorage. (page 7,8)
- Concerning planning factors, mention FMATS in both planning factor analysis.
- Realize that in twenty years, FMATS will be an officially recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).
- Present statutes are really deficient. Statutes under old Dept. of Highways were better from a highway standpoint.
- Procedural concern: Need DOT to tell public 1) What was done with comments? And 2) What kind of implementation assurances can DOT offer?
- Rename “Statewide Transportation Plan” to “Statewide Transportation Policy Plan”, since it is not really a “plan.”
- DOT should concentrate on inter-community roads and arterials.
- Prince of Wales roads all qualify as arterials.
- Suggests a policy like Missouri’s—when traffic reaches 100 AADT/day, pave the road.
- Prioritize projects to ensure their affordability.
- A lot of what’s in the policy and procedures manual directly affects the motoring public (though policy and procedures manual is internal only). When we set policy, it should be done by regulation (if it affects the public) rather than by policy and procedure. That’s what the administrative code is for.
- Can we see weighted criteria?
- Once a project has been developed it shouldn’t be overridden by another.
- Why is the Governor splitting up the pie (policy initiatives for NHS, Community Transportation /Economic Development, and TRAAK) before there’s a statewide plan?
- Local contributions and local assumptions of M&O responsibilities are weighted to help projects to gain higher rank in scoring. This should certainly be retained along with higher score for safety items.
- A greater consideration for partnering with local government should be included. Local contribution to the project should be weighted higher than four.
- A needs assessment process should be established at local and regional areas of state and it should be goal oriented.
- Aviation and rural/urban road criteria rewarding local contribution or land and/or resources should be eliminated. Rural communities often have no land base from which land can be donated and rarely own enough construction materials for a transportation project.
- Levy resource extraction surcharges to pay for facilities—National Economic Development Criteria should be used for all projects in which benefits must outweigh costs—must include intangible benefits lost when viewsheds are damaged and wildlife is displaced.
- Statewide assessment has not resulted in equitable allocation by region.



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

- Financing, integrated system, coordination, fulfilling growing needs, cooperation; modern technology.



- There needs to be better communication between DOT and Native corporations to facilitate jobs in the villages. DOT should email the villages status reports on their list of projects.
- Develop new networks while maintaining current networks at minimum cost.
- Regulation could address the question of arterial collector and local roads and streets. Some of the systems are not correctly classified. The present system doesn't seem to allow public input into the functional classification of roads.
- Need 1) Maintenance funding of existing infrastructure and 2) Citizen involvement in planning process.
- I support "Teaming with wildlife" initiative for 75 percent federal \$ for wild-life related recreation (e.g., nature trailheads) and education (interpretive signs).
- Educate the public through newspaper articles, magazines, TV. We Alaskans are always "agin" new and different ideas about anything.



Public meeting in McCarthy

- A very large portion of Prince of Wales is in the unorganized borough. DOT/PF is the transportation agency. There is no elected official. The department could consult with the Prince of Whales community councils whose members are elected by their respective communities. I'm sure they would be glad to help with a needs list.
- Direct mailing is the best approach for contacting the public. All won't respond. Do not assume that people who don't respond are not interested. Some people don't have time. That's what we voted for the politicians for. This is a representative democracy. Boroughs can educate the public; inform the citizens. Use *Frontiersman* and *Anchorage Daily News* to feed the info to the public.
- Suggest that people who vote should be on the mailing list. They are the ones who should be notified. Use voter registration list or voters as the mailing list.
- Saturday night might be a good time for a public meeting.
- The local government doesn't express the will of the people, how do locals get to say they don't want the project.
- I am concerned about how the department responds to our needs. DOT tells us to work with AMATS on project needs, but because a project is an NHS route, AMATS tells us to talk to the state. I am very frustrated and don't think either one is truly listening to us.
- Tribal governments need to be kept informed as to key transportation policy developments and initiatives, as the local city governments are.
- During the public outreach there seems to have been very little effort to reach out to shippers and commercial service providers for their input.
- DOT should ensure continuous public involvement and should provide facilitation training for all personnel, including engineering staff, who will work with the public.
- Adequate information should be provided to the general public regularly so they will understand details of future transportation plans.
- A uniform, consistent policy of respect for Tribal governments and cooperation with those Tribal bodies must be articulated by the head of the DOT and then that policy must be impressed upon and followed by the regional and local DOT representatives.
- The State needs to utilize local concerned citizens and volunteer groups to address needs. This will also cut costs.

- Flood/erosion planning, implementation, and maintenance need to include comprehensive partnerships with both local and state elements. The pay back is flood/erosion prevention and mitigation as well as monetary savings.
- Best provide for long term benefits, reduced cost from increased efficiency, to the potential users through a methodological process of cooperation in permitting, planning and constructing of corridors.
- Recommend additional policy: “Early coordination between the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and local governments should be a priority when developing specific projects within the local governments jurisdiction.”
- In long-range planning for rural Alaska there should be rural Alaska representation at policy level.
- Make clear the aspects of decision-making that public can influence.
- Level the playing field, articulate all assumptions about transportation.
- You agency people should talk more to each other, also within an agency there should be more communication.
- Project Evaluation Board ranking should be done in public, eliminate closed door ranking meetings.
- No more behind the scenes meetings that result in sudden changes in projects status.
- To us it appears that you made some of your decisions according to the requests of certain individuals without any thought of what was best for the majority, in other words, which streets are used the most and need repairing the most.
- Clarify the process. (Is it DOT or the TRAAK board that selects new TRAAK/ISTEA proposals for funding?) Maybe the TRAAK board should have a public involvement process.
- Make decision-making process more consistent, easier to understand and accessible.
- We need more feedback on and more opportunity to participate in the development of the Marine Highway schedule. It affects our business.
- My ongoing concern is that there is a balance between sound administrative policy/decision making and public input/opinion.
- Do the planning and scoping studies along with other public agencies to provide the needed infrastructure for industry.
- Lack of involvement of municipalities in state process.
- If the public is concerned about a project, their comments should be weighed in making final transportation priority needs/decisions.
- Attempts to remove political favors out of DOT/PF plans. I like the criteria to somehow prioritize projects across this state that are really needed. On the other hand, some of the scoring needs to be fixed.
- Coordinate DOTPF rural transportation projects with village safe water construction.
- Not enough communication within agencies.
- Help the public understand that transportation plans are fully encompassing and attempt to address all users within a community: cars, pedestrians, bikes, tourism.
- Project selection needs to be filtered through a local priority setting process that is fully informed.



Koyukuk

Department of Community and Economic Development



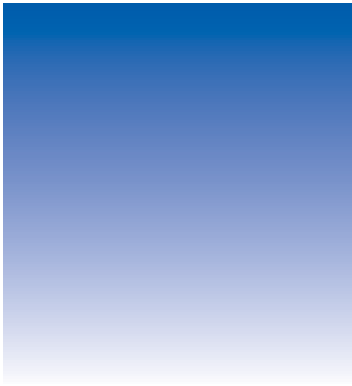
- My major concern is that local community committees should be involved early in the identification of projects and in review of areawide priorities. Local understanding of timelines is also very important.
- I think a statewide committee of one person from each area/major community should sit on a board and advise DOT of needs in each area.
- More cooperation among agencies (document and demonstrate this cooperation).
- I think that the people need a more hands-on planning for their area.
- Provide assistance to communities to submit plans (via DCRA?)
- I would like to be involved in deciding what roads to repair.
- Maintain commitment to AMATS.
- I would like to be a part of the planning of new construction and maintenance methods. We always seem to have the money to do the job over and over but never the money to do the job right. Why? I would like to be on the Policy Committee.
- Not enough local involvement in over-all plan and development of priorities for the National Highway System.
- Join the Alaska Municipal League (AML) and DOT & PF with a cooperative agreement to establish a statewide municipal group to review plans, policies, and procedures. The Oregon DOT has such an agreement with the League of Oregon Cities. AML would be an effective voice to help balance rural/urban transportation issues. A formal state-local government agreement is needed.
- Support and enhance the FMATS process.
- Coordination between agencies to address infrastructure to include village issues, i.e., sewer, environmental factors.
- Involve rural people for rural projects. At least they'll work to have DOT projects in villages.
- Greater consideration for partnering with local government should be included. Local contribution to the project should be weighted higher than four in project evaluation.
- The public needs to know more about statewide transportation planning because only state officials know about the above.
- More intergovernmental coordination will help.
- Advise them of the best facts and projections available; present the need to phase out private vehicles in favor of public transit: that will get their attention.
- Coordinate with existing systems—broker private transportation.
- DNR+DOT: agency communication.
- The “pre-plan”, “draft plan”, and “final plan” planning sequence may appear to add more paperwork to a long, red-taped process. Is there a way to incorporate public concerns while making the planning process more efficient?
- The department has little credibility due to the movement of projects in and out of the STIP every year. The department needs to do what they say they will do. Leave the STIP alone for a while.
- Why can't the public involvement process for projects be similar to the PIP for the Statewide Plan (i.e., proactive, two-way forums)?
- The makeup of the Policy Advisory Committee for *Vision: 2020* is such that the actual users of the State Transportation System are grossly under-represented. The Public Review Group might not necessarily reflect the view of the public as a whole.

- Any public participation process should include access to the state's largest transportation system (AMATS). This could be through a joint effort or, since the DOT has significant representation on AMATS, as an advisory to those DOT representatives.
- Particularly the "silent majority" who is the major users would expect to benefit from future improvement projects.
- The Public Review Group could easily be stacked with representatives of groups who oppose most system improvements, particularly for private vehicle and commercial transport.
- There is no requirement that the professional staff act as ombudsmen for the silent majority to insure that the Public Review Group will not be skewed against the wishes of the actual and total public.
- We do not believe that the current public participation process is responsive to our needs and we do not believe that rural interests are adequately represented in the overall planning process or project evaluation and scoring.
- DOT should use teams to plan, develop, design, and construct projects. Teams should include planners, landscape architects, engineers, maintenance personnel, police, emergency personnel and the public.
- The spectrum of involvement must be broadened if the department has any hope of truly understanding what it is most Alaskans want to see in our transportation system and its development.
- Recommend DOT establish a bicycle/pedestrian working group to allow public input in creating and implementing strategies.
- We believe there was more intended latitude for the use of enhancement money than has been reflected in the planning process and particularly in the public involvement part of the planning process.
- This does not take an elaborate planning process and a whole trainload of planners. It takes professionals who can work with elected officials and this does not preclude an open process that involves the public in a meaningful process.
- The present selection processes based on inventory and condition surveys, interaction between local, state and federal agencies, involvement of politicians, citizens and bureaucrats are sufficient and cost effective.
- The state should take the initiative to develop a rural equivalent to Metropolitan Planning Organization so rural communities and Tribal governments will also have a seat at the table to voice their unique concerns.
- The Policy Advisory Committee recommendations are basically sound, especially the public involvement.
- We need to give most weight to the needs and wishes of local communities, not just to the few developers with political and monied connections.
- Regarding public meetings, twice now in 1997 I have found newspaper announcements about the meetings after the meetings took place.
- From its inception, the Alaska Marine Highway System was developed to be the "Highway" for Southeast Alaska. Recognizing ideology changes from Administration to Administration and Commissioner to Commissioner, users of the AMHS rely on the State to honor the System's original intent and mission. Due to competition for limited resources, however, the focus of the AMHS mission has changed. In an at-



Near Glennallen

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



tempt to refocus AMHS to its initial mission, a partnership must be forged between AMHS, regional associations such as Southeast Conference and local communities. The partnership must re-establish the goals and objectives of AMHS and as one voice communicate the needs to the State.

- Folks are either too busy or too intimidated by its complexity to read the whole white booklet.
- A policy to improve public input in how highway funds are used is needed.
- The user-friendly questionnaire at the beginning is great! Would it be possible to mail just the questionnaire to all residents? The *Vision 2020 Update* book is just too lengthy, complicated and technical for the average citizen to understand.
- I saw the advertisement (for the *Call For Ideas* public meetings) in our local paper too late. Why not publicize over the radio? No one knows about this!



Seward Highway near Moose Pass

- Don't just spend money on tourist-related projects. Go and see where the worst roads are and fix them first. Also, listen and respond to callers, residents and local input.
- Since I don't wish to receive the lengthy book again, I choose not to provide my name. Thanks for asking my input though!
- To encourage citizen input, I would suggest publicizing the meetings over the radio through public service announcements and stories by news reporters. Also, putting the newspaper announcement farther in advance of the events might help.
- Need to hear from actual commuters using roads, not just community residents.
- Need a lot more coordination between agencies to get the most for the money.

- Coordinate with adjacent or affected landowners and land managers. Get a team for each highway. (e.g., the Denali Highway Scenic by-way did not include the Fairbanks office of the Department of Natural Resources).
- Put the number of buses expected on highways each day in the Navigator (which shows construction sites and dates) so people can expect and plan for heavy bus traffic.
- There should be more interdepartmental coordination.
- Public involvement at DOT is excessive in some cases (only community and vocal people comment).
- AMHS and the other providers need to talk to each other about what is the best way to meet transportation needs.
- Need more public involvement in Federal Lands Highway Program (almost non-existent now).
- Suggested replacement for first Policy Advisory Committee policy on public involvement: Provide priority consideration to local citizen comment and preferences in the entire transportation planning, design and construction process to ensure that policies and projects reflect local public values and needs.
- A listing of new road miles constructed each year and in the future should be included whenever a planning document is put out for public review. These should be

limited to new miles constructed with the same types of funds for which planning is being done.

- I (and fellow legislators) will not have enough time to respond to this document because the deadline is only two days after our adjournment date, which is our busiest time of the year.
- Organizations such as the Resource Development Council and Alaska Miners Association have specific interests to address and need to be a part of this process. How will this input be coordinated and priorities addressed?
- Rural people's views should be included in transportation planning for the state.
- Handicap access to transportation media campaign.
- Involve people without vehicles in planning.
- Regulation could address questions of arterial, collector and local roads. Some facilities are not correctly classified. The present system doesn't seem to allow public input in functional classification of roads.
- While most professionals in our society take great pride in their education, it is often the case that a too-narrow focus prevents professionals from seeing issues that are obvious to a user.
- Keep up the information flow—great job so far.
- By bringing others into the planning and design phase an agency anticipates problems and can design them out.
- Don't have the plan ahead of asking folks what should be in it or how it should be prioritized. Good luck!!
- I object to the political statements in the back such as "The Governor's plan to emphasize trails and upkeep is excellent—stick to it!" etc. Which is really the Governor's plan to siphon money for needed road projects to build nature paths. Statements like those in an informational document paid for with state funds looks dangerously like a political document, which is an absolute violation of the people's trust.
- Looking forward to being involved.
- Don't get in front of local public process, in terms of Copper River Trail. Talk to Cordova residents first before proceeding. Don't get DOT out in front of DNR process and public.
- I believe that ADOT does a "great job" with their available resources.
- The spectrum of involvement must be broadened if the department has any hope of truly understanding what it is most Alaskans want to see in our transportation system and its development.
- Concern about AMATS provision for public involvement.
- Local and tribal governments must be involved as they know better than anyone what their individual communities need. Professional organizations such as the Alaskan Trucking Association have good ideas as to the needs of the major highway systems.
- Let's all work together for the betterment of all Alaskans.
- At meetings the state listens to newcomers and it should listen more to long term residents.
- Draft Policy #6 should include recreational user group organizations (current or potential users). Draft Policy #9 same comment. Note: most user organizations are more than willing to provide labels and/or names/addresses of their members.





- Join the Alaska Municipal League (AML) and DOT&PF with a cooperative agreement to establish a statewide municipal group to review plans, policies, and procedures. The Oregon DOT has such an agreement with the League of Oregon cities. AML would be an effective voice to help balance rural/urban transportation issues. A formal state-local government agreement is needed.
- LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN. DOT has a reputation for NOT listening! Coordinate with other agencies early in the process.
- I was relieved to hear one of the gentlemen say something earlier about if a community wasn't unified behind wanting a road they wouldn't build a road.
- Need long-term public process and full public participation.
- DOT should inform the community on the final plan and what legal maneuver to use to accomplish its plan.
- There should be a greater effort to involve the public. I do not believe that a Mayor and city council elected with a fifteen percent voter turnout speak for the people.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Anaktuvuk Pass

- Policy themes #6 and #9: Might be combined. Add “. . . all identifiable interest groups, and ordinary citizens”. Theme #11: Change “consider” to “develop and implement”. Theme #14: Change “operation” to “design, build, and operate”.
- Need citizen involvement in decision making process.
- DOT&PF should improve sensitivity to local consensus.
- Don't rely strictly on community planning departments for input to state or to funnel input to state.
- I feel that local government and special interest input supersedes the citizens' input on projects that impact their neighborhoods. Wish we could have a more people-friendly transportation (mass transit) instead of adverse impacts on neighborhoods.
- Communication from DOT to the villages about projects is ineffective:
 - a) Villages don't always know what has happened to their projects in the STIP process. There needs to be a special announcement to each village saying what happened to their nominations. Villages don't always know when projects have been delayed when the STIP is amended (an example is the Unalakleet Landfill Road delay).
 - b) Get everybody together at the same time, including engineers on the project, to communicate what projects are going to take place in the village. Special equipment in the village would be maintained if they knew that a project was coming. Use Bering Straits Newsletter.
- DOT should follow a policy that the Alaska Municipal League has recently adopted. An AML committee representing all non-MPO communities could coordinate directly with DOT on policy, allocation (both geographical and modal), and the STIP process (criteria, scoring system). The advantage is that the group would represent all municipalities. Each community would not have to raise its voice alone. Coordination for DOT with local governments would also improve.
- Need a policy to improve public input in how highway funds are used.
- I would like to have input in the DOT policy statement regarding M&O and design. I feel we need to go back to basic road building and maintenance. Look at the Yukon highways.

- I would like to be a part of the planning of new construction and maintenance methods. We always seem to have the money to do the job over and over, but never the money to do the job right. Why? I would like to be on the Policy Committee.
- We do not believe that the current public participation process is responsive to our needs and we do not believe that rural interests are adequately represented in the overall planning process or project evaluation.
- Coordination, consultation, and cooperation is a must between land managers before any road building is done over public lands—DOT, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Game, and Boroughs when appropriate.



DOTPF/COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES

- DOT's giving priority to projects in the STIP process where gravel, right-of-way, etc. are contributed by locals: The Native corporation owns the land. They can't give up their assets; they're a for-profit organization. They would not be serving their shareholders if they gave away assets.
- State roads running through organized cities should be turned over to those cities. This would 1) empower cities to plan their own growth, 2) free DOT from local road construction and maintenance and 3) reduce the overlap/redundancy/friction between DOT and city Public Works Departments.
- Promote local government to raise fees or taxes to maintain their current docks and harbors infrastructure.
- Who would maintain the road to the new subdivision? The Northern Region area planner said that DOT would turn it over to the borough to maintain. Once built, there's nothing to keep it from sinking, even after using Styrofoam and dyebar at the freeze level in constructing the road. It's expensive to build this way but the price of gravel is about the same right now as building using Styrofoam and dye bar.
- We need to have a commitment to adequately fund the maintenance of the existing system. Clearly defined state and municipal duties for maintenance.
- If DOT wants to turn over maintenance of roads to local governments, DOT must fix them up first before transferring. The local road service areas look out for the local taxpayers. Only a few roads connect between road service areas. A borough maintenance plan that's not dictatorial would not be opposed by the road service areas. Borough-wide, there should be a road maintenance plan.
- Why is the development of the Parks Highway dependent on the borough anyway? There are multiple layers of bureaucracy!
- In some boroughs, Local Improvement Districts (LID's) in neighborhoods provide the funding for an areawide paving program. These help air quality and dust control. There is a question as to whether there's rural equity in this approach to road improvement.
- Support for DOT bringing roads up to good condition, then turning them over to local government.
- Local Contributions and local assumptions of M&O responsibilities are weighted to help projects to gain higher rank in scoring. This should certainly be retained along with higher score for safety items.



Road maintenance vehicles

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- Don't we have public elected officials for some of this stuff?
- Turn over "Drive in Parks" to Transportation.
- From the local municipality's point of view, it appears the state is looking at us to bear these responsibilities. Local municipalities, however, are even less equipped to provide the necessary resources than the State. One need only look at the State's inability to meet its obligation to maintain harbors. To balance resources with the statewide transportation needs, the state must look to innovative ideas to reduce costs and, where possible, increase revenues.
- Need better coordination between state and local governments for M&O, including snow removal.
- Privatization is a scary prospect. Major mistake to privatize.

FUNDING SOURCES



Photo by Bill Evans, Department of Natural Resources

Pulloff on Seward Highway

- Support a \$1/gallon gas tax to help cover the external costs of transportation.
- I support a dedicated fuel tax supported transportation fund.
- Consider implementing tolls on Alaska highways: \$.25 for residents, and \$2.00 for non-residents.
- Institute a five to ten cent tax on fuel to pay for at least a portion of road maintenance.
- Tax vehicles based on their weight.
- Tax vehicles on a seasonal basis.
- Create a toll road at the U.S./Canada border so tourists pay for something.
- Push for "point of sale" legislation for snowmobiles.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

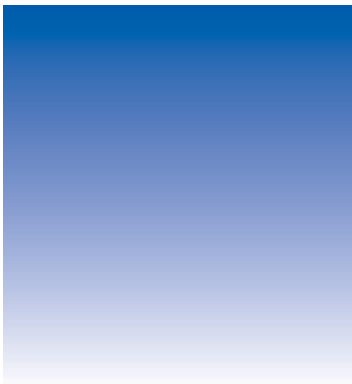
- Support for REGIONAL allocations; do NOT use a STATEWIDE assessment of need.
- DOT & PF spends too much on studies. Curious as to how much DOT&PF spends on planning and wished it could be spent on other community necessities such as schools and playgrounds.
- More balance of special interest projects vs. those that will have a measurable benefit to the majority of Alaska citizens.
- Lack of construction in Northern Region.
- Dollars spent on transportation should be based on the number of people that will use the transportation facility. The more populous areas would receive a larger proportion of the available funds.
- A stable, consistent and predictable process to allocate scarce resources.
- Balance between all modes—avoid swings that characterize last ten years
- People LIVE in Anchorage. Spend money there, where they travel. Anchorage-Railway area.

- The state seems to focus on urban areas' transportation needs as a priority over less populated rural communities.
- How to balance the transportation needs of rural and urban Alaska.
- Motor fuel tax revenues should support winter trail maintenance.
- A percentage of the gas tax could be returned to the community for intracommunity needs.
- Don't address ONLY the transportation needs of the Railbelt. Don't forget the rural area. Distrust the current hostile state legislature to take care of rural needs.
- Comment on the disparity between funding for urban and rural roads. Capital maintenance.
- Improve access to isolated southeast communities through adequate funding of the Alaska Marine Highway System.
- Ensure marine tax receipts maintain current infrastructure.
- Must change Capital Improvement Program funding formula. Remote villages receive one percent, urban centers 99 percent Gas tax for roads is not accounted for in remote villages.
- Use marine fuel taxes for ports and harbors.
- I want to see more equity in funds allocation. Why do passable roads in Anchorage get reconstruction while unsatisfactory roads in Homer continue to deteriorate? I favor the use of the Permanent Fund to fill maintenance gap and augment reconstruction.
- Money from the Permanent Fund should be used to maintain the safety of Alaska's transportation systems.
- If \$5 million is spent each year to repair stud tire damage, tell us where the damage occurs and modify the law to reflect this.
- There is a disparity between funding for urban and rural roads for capital maintenance.
- Don't spent ISTE \$ on "drainage-sediment" basins that should have been in the original road design to meet federal/state criteria.
- Before Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budgets are slashed any further, Alaska's policy should be to allocate more CIP money to rural projects. If these rural projects are not constructed soon they may never be.
- Public and private funding for TRAAK and other beautification projects. Aesthetic value doesn't mean much when roadways are in need of resurfacing.
- I wonder why state projects get higher priority for funding than do local projects.
- More \$\$ for TRAAK projects.
- Biggest waste of money would be bike path down Copper River.
- Priority for legislature to establish and fund a statewide snowmobile coordinator position within Department of Natural Resources, Division of Motor Vehicles or DOT. Just pick one and do it!
- The state shouldn't provide recreational trails or boat docks for the public. Leave it to private people. This will create jobs and also save the state money to pay for better roads on what we all pay taxes on and use. I don't use boat docks or trails.



Snowmobile racing in Southcentral Alaska

Department of Community and Economic Development



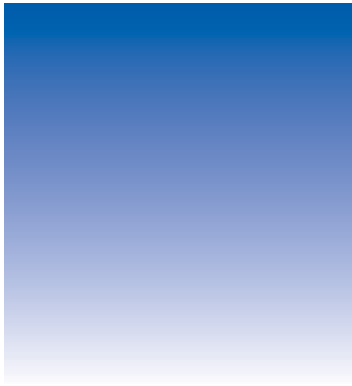
- Funds for trail staking are not enough to complete project. Need funds to finish trail from Koyuk to Nome.
- A set percentage of all construction funds, say twenty percent should be earmarked for pioneer roads and reasonable gravel roads.
- Consider elder population needs.
- We don't need all these big road projects in the wintertime we just have to baby-sit them over the winter.
- Expenditure Priority Order: 1) safety improvements, 2) resource development, 3) community connections.
- Federal money should be used for the railroad system (not just highways). Ninety percent of the people visit the state by boat or by plane; they should be put on trains instead of buses because our road system is highly impacted during the summer.
- With respect to the planning factors: The Pavement Management System is unable to handle gravel surface roads. The department badly needs a paving policy. Certainly all arterial highways should be paved. The energy cost to use gravel surface roads is much higher than paved roads.
- We need to concentrate our Forest Highway funds on the Prince of Wales system.
- I support needs-based assessment of projects rather than decisions made by politics.
- Need planning due to increase in traffic. Need emergency procedures for massive traffic tie-ups. There needs to be a way to fast-track emergency projects as needed. Need flexibility to do adjustments.
- I would rather see each agency receive its fair share of funding so needed projects can be established and funded based on need.
- Villages, always low priority. I would like to see more rural projects in budget.
- I do not like rural Alaska community needs being excluded. We all work hard filling out the project nomination forms because there is a genuine need for transportation access. It seems like no matter what we do, the urban residents of the state get what they want. When rural communities ask for a project, DOT should check out the communities to determine if this is a real need. Which there usually is.
- Need to insure that projects in rural Alaska do not compete directly with the large urban centers.
- Agree with suggested change for surface transportation project evaluation criteria to separate the program for state highway projects for the Community Transportation Program. I very much agree with suggested change with respect to Harbors. Standard #13 should be changed to Marine Hazards for Harbors.
- I support the monies being distributed fairly statewide.
- Politics, rural Alaska communities forever standing in line as urban areas get "priority" projects, if rural communities lack political clout they usually get sidelined out.
- I think many projects in the past have been funded on wants rather than needs.
- Perhaps Anchorage will have more influence over critical Southeast issues than is healthy. For example: why repair or replace docks for communities with just twenty people?
- The in-kind contribution criteria place the poorest communities at a distinct disadvantage to those communities with more resources. The amended criteria has increased the weight of this factor from three to four. We object and suggest it be deleted altogether.

- The projects funded by disaster grants haven't been perceived as priority projects.
- Increase proportion of resources dedicated to programming and planning.
- Project evaluation criteria that virtually require the community to donate construction materials and/or land owned by someone else in order to receive a greatly needed transportation facility place an unfair burden on the community and pit it against their own ANCSA corporation. ANCSA village and regional corporation, which own land construction materials, are profit making corporations under state and federal law, not social service organizations.
- The amended criteria for remote roads and trails increases Health & Quality of Life (Access to Basic Necessities) from a weight of three to that of four. We agree that this change is a step in the right direction, but it should have a weight of five.
- In the Aviation ranking criteria, erosion control should have more weight than a factor of two. If a community loses a runway, generally they lose their only transportation link.
- Project evaluation factor (5) Community M&O contribution and factor (6) Local Capital contribution should be deleted altogether. These standards are favorable to communities with significant resources. Areas with little income have difficulty competing. The rich get richer and the poor get nothing.
- The process of ranking projects on a statewide basis concerns me. How does the director of the Alaska Marine Highway System adequately evaluate a road project in the northern region during Project Evaluation Board scoring? I am skeptical that this will ever be a truly "objective exercise".
- The local road construction industry needs to have a sustainable level of work on a year to year basis in order to survive. If projects for one particular region are deferred to the third year on the STIP, businesses may be affected. Members of the Fairbanks community have expressed a concern that the Northern Region is being shortchanged on its share of road construction projects.
- We need to come to some agreement to try and balance the statewide transportation needs with the needs of communities to have a predictable level of projects each year.
- We should not forget where the funding comes from: the users of fuel. If other groups want to dominate the process, as they are attempting, then a fair share of corresponding funding should be secured from them.
- The four surface transportation categories make fair distribution of funds difficult because projects compete with each other in not just one program, but in four separate categories. A formula based on "points" alone cannot work.
- With the current level of deterioration of our roads and bridges and shrinking Federal participation, how can we afford to spend \$8,000,000 each year for planning? More is needed on engineering solutions to our unique Alaska road maintenance problems.
- What is the rationale for allocating funds between the NHS, the CTP and the TRAAK program? Who decides and how is it decided—what percentage of funds goes to each program? Public input is a critical element in this decision making process.
- There is no guidance or information in the proposed plans on how funds might be allocated between various categories, any priority between categories, or how AMATS is integrated into the system.
- DOT&PF's focus seems to be almost exclusively centered on expanding bicycle and pedestrian trails.



Trail near Sitka

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- No improvement on Petersville Road. A waste of money.
- Levy resource extraction surcharges to pay for facilities—National Economic Development Criteria should be used for all projects in which benefits must outweigh costs—must include intangible benefits lost when viewsheds are damaged and wild-life is displaced.
- The State has a responsibility to fund those capital improvements and services which provide statewide benefits. From highways of the Interior to the ferry system of Southeast, the State bears responsibility to insure all modes of transportation are available to its citizens. With diminishing resources, both at the State level and the Federal level, the challenge for the State to adequately fund transportation capital improvements and system maintenance is increasing.
- It is very helpful, when putting together a program, to have a consistent evaluation process and criteria. The State has made tremendous improvements in stabilizing the process over the last few years.
- It is a terrible waste to design a project and then change the priorities so it is not constructed. This change will give the program more consistency.
- Once a project enters the design phase it should be committed though the construction phase. This assumes insurmountable obstacle or excessive costs are not discovered during design.
- Need a policy to improve public input in how highway funds are used.
- Conference after determining regional priorities to determine statewide priorities.
- Where is the \$4 million the Commissioner promised for local Fairbanks road projects?
- Statewide assessment has not resulted in equitable allocation by region.
- There should be a fairness or equity factor (overall) during the draft STIP process.
- The infrastructure we have now is not being utilized. It could handle three times as many bus routes in Fairbanks without adding any capital expenses (all that is needed is funding for fuel and wages).
- Once a project has been developed it shouldn't be overridden by another.
- The use of the Project Evaluation Criteria has not resulted in an equitable distribution of funds to all regions. Use of criteria favors larger urban areas (Anchorage)
- How is population density considered in project selection? Important to emphasize.
- Freight and commerce are not in project ranking criteria, but major freight routes included in National Highway System, which has no project evaluation criteria. How are the NHS project priorities determined by the department and why isn't there any public involvement into that process?
- Scoring criteria should follow the big picture.
- State could pass through some of the federal funding to local communities for their own priority for maintenance and capital projects.
- We do not believe that the current public participation process is responsive to our needs and we do not believe that rural interests are adequately represented in the overall planning process or project evaluation.
- We should use the available funds, not for more misguided, excessive planning, but where they are needed most: in better designs and in quality products to minimize maintenance expenditures and enhance operations.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- Gravel sources in the North Slope Borough are a problem
- A Tribal Employment Rights Officer (TERO) for Kawerak Corporation maintains a data bank of workers in each village. These individuals are referred to the contractors who are doing transportation projects. Contractors have to be educated about this list.
- Training is needed so that local Natives in villages can qualify to work on the projects. For example, workers need to have a Commercial Driver's license to drive a truck on a project. That training is needed in the villages, not just in Fairbanks. Concerned about wages paid to locals on these projects; \$10.50 per hour for Public Health Service, Village Safe Water, and DOT projects is too low, even insulting. Low wages can cause shoddy work.
- Let villages handle their own projects
- Local hire, local training for future projects.
- The Rainbird Trail has been devastated just for survey purposes—so much for trails.
- Will the department just spend Federal monies to pay DOT M&O personnel to crack seal and/or resurface paved roads or will the construction industry see some contract work?
- Once the new subdivision road is built, there's nothing to keep it from sinking, even after using Styrofoam and dyebar at freeze level in constructing the road. It's expensive to build this way but the price of gravel is so high it's the same cost either way.
- Institute Governor Knowles' plan for highway standards, and then bring on line several new and upgraded highways.
- Sealing would keep materials on the road and not in the ditches which then clog culverts and need draining out. Use a better material for paving which can increase life of the pavement.
- DOT&PF should be smarter about pavements and bonding thereof so the roads last longer. The contractors can do better than they currently are.
- We need to plan for Arctic and Subarctic climate considerations and learn from others: i.e., Europe and Asia.
- Establish a paving policy.
- Why do roads last only last three years when they're supposed to last ten?
- In cities, configure intersections so they work in all areas.
- Use Recycled Asphalt Paving (RAP) on those streets being upgraded from gravel roads.
- The agency should consider the use of glassphalt and other recycled products to decrease cost and increase the lifespan of roads, trails and airstrips. There have been successful glassphalt projects in the state. Why haven't these been continued?
- I am 70 years old and want to see metric for road signs.
- When we put in a gravel road, do it right. Not rocks like marbles at the bottom that end up on top to be graded in the next two years. We put rock on the bottom from two feet in diameter. The big rocks come to the top; the little ones go to the bottom of a roadbed. There should be a better way to make a roadbed on new ground.



*Auto transport truck
on Seward Highway*

Photo by Bill Evans, Department of Natural Resources



- Adopt non-State and non-federal aid road standards; i.e., for local municipalities.
- The department needs to review its affirmative action numerical goals in its construction contracts. The Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area of Anchorage of fourteen percent minority hire and six percent female hire is not adequate when we have 70-80 percent unemployment in rural Alaska.
- I also support force account projects with a fair review and development of a fair wage schedule.
- Need multi-disciplined design.
- In cities, configure intersections so they work in all areas, adequate maintenance of existing facilities.
- Upgrade high traffic intersection for better turning movements (and design new ones to work from the start, not as an expensive upgrade later). Intensively upgrade key intersections, perhaps with grade separations, cooperation with employers for staggered work hours, etc.



Small boat harbor in Cordova

- Increase truck passing lanes on all current highways. . . recreational vehicles + tanker trucks are causing increasing safety problems.
- The most important issue facing Alaska in the next twenty years is modern technology.
- Narrow roads—tourist obstructions.
- Improvements to existing roads to improve safety and reliability and design changes to incorporate lessons learned so as to enhance safety.
- The department needs to have a policy favoring local hire for transportation improvement projects in the villages. This could be done by having more projects go out under force account. Develop a department policy that says when the department will use force account.

- I am against the high (25 percent) overhead charged by DOT on projects.
- Build a better quality product and you have less M&O later.
- Communication should be better in design and implementation of projects.
- As a member of the Wasilla Planning and Zoning commission, I believe we should push mass transportation including light rail, citing European examples. Technology allows a lot of things.
- I would like to have input in the DOT policy statement regarding M&O and design. I feel we need to go back to basic road building and maintenance. Look at the Yukon highways.
- I would like to be a part of the planning of new construction and maintenance methods. We always seem to have the money to do the job over and over, but never the money to do the job right. Why? I would like to be on the Policy Committee.
- Some bridges are too low for kayakers/rafters.
- Maintain public use of pullouts during DOT&PF construction.
- Our aim should be to provide better designs, better product quality and above all, better funded maintenance. The last is the biggest challenge because of the lack of federal funding and insufficient state expenditures.

- We should use the available funds, not for more misguided, excessive planning, but where they are needed most: in better designs and in quality products to minimize maintenance expenditures and enhance operations.
- DOT&PF needs to closer monitor contract compliance for road construction and upgrades.
- Why isn't the constructor held responsible for road construction quality after the construction has ended? Shouldn't the contractor be held liable to repair any defects in the road for one or two years after construction?
- An example of poor contract compliance is the reconstruction of the Sterling Highway between Soldotna and Sterling where the contractor obviously used poor fill materials.
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths should be included in the budgets and planning for all new highways and the re-surfacing or re-alignment of old ones. These should be a minimum of six feet wide, be a part of the roadbed (except in urban areas or between adjacent centers of population where there should be a separate corridor), and contain a narrow rumble strip to alert both motorists and cyclists they are swerving into each other's right of way. Bicycle/pedestrian lanes also serve as temporary pull offs for flat tire repair, engine problems, to switch drivers, kid care, etc. without becoming a hazard to traffic, especially during winter conditions. Alaska roads have long stretches between pull-offs.
- All highways and bridges should be designed to not interfere with recreational or subsistence uses. For example, bridges should be of sufficient height to allow rafting, kayaking, and other boating activities.
- Consider a training/apprenticeship program for chronically unemployed people as a source of road maintenance/construction workers. DOT could cooperate with other agencies such as vocational rehabilitation programs and possibly receive a grant.
- Insure that original highway construction is of sufficient quality to insure a long-term use result.
- I think our most important transportation problem in the Fairbanks area is that our transportation system has resulted from efforts to obtain as large a budget as possible, and a narrow-minded focus on moving people and goods. Our transportation system was not designed to enhance our community or lifestyles. In many ways, the existing system does serve the community well, but there are so many examples of places where money could have been better spent if we were not required to meet federal standards, or if money could have been spent for maintenance and enhancement and not just construction. For example, on p.8 expressways are referred to as "improvements." In Fairbanks, the expressways have cut up our town, making it almost impossible for pedestrian, bicycles, horses, snowmachines to get from one side to the other. Even people in cars have a hard time getting from one side to another!
- Accessibility for handicapped people is important to consider when first building facilities (ramps, size etc.) It is less expensive to build facilities with this in mind than it is to go back and change it later.
- NEXTEA will call for higher design standards.
- Roads should go someplace (have an origin and destination) and be safe.



values VALUES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Develop the appropriate transportation infrastructure necessary to become competitive locally and globally in the manufacturing of value-added products.
- Jobs in the villages. Per the policy regarding Access & Economic Development: remember that project jobs in the villages are part of economic development. The jobs themselves, when villagers have them, constitute economic development. Outside contractors take money out of the village. I support local hire. There needs to be better communication between DOT and Native corporations to facilitate jobs in the villages. DOT should email the villages status reports on their list of projects.



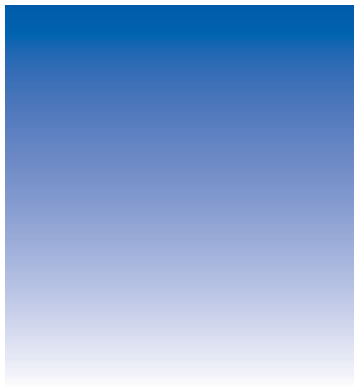
Bill Stokes, Department of Environmental Conservation

Selawick Bridge

- Improving access to communities and resources to promote economic development should be the top priority of this state's transportation plan.
- Maintain acceptable levels of transportation services to support economic growth.
- Upgrade and utilize existing transportation facilities geared for future economic projects.
- Create the infrastructure needed to sustain a strong, stable diverse economy.
- Lower the cost of merchandise by providing for a comprehensive transportation system.
- Improve economic development for each community across the state.
- Transportation in rural Alaska is needed for community development to proceed as local people plan for their community. Transportation projects also offer job opportunities to local people.
- With the closure of the Ketchikan Pulp Mill, now would be a good time to get additional money from the Federal Government for a road which would create jobs and keep the community from depression.
- Cargo (fresh salmon, etc); connecting villages for tourism; ferry systems.
- If no roads—no tourists for economic development.
- Some type of transportation in the bush would be beneficial in terms of reduced freight costs & economic development (mining, etc).
- The Alaska Marine Highway System should be expanded to include western Alaska. For economic development of any sort, you need to have some sort of regional transportation to get goods and services out at a reasonable cost.
- Minerals, oil and gas, tourism and forestry should be specifically and separately addressed in the planning documents.
- Develop and/or upgrade transportation systems that foster and support economic development, particularly in rural Alaska which lacks adequate systems.
- Expenditure priority order should be: 1) Safety improvements 2) Resource development 3) Community connections.

- The road from Williamsport to Iliamna Lake should be rebuilt. A good road would reduce the costs of construction and maintenance in the region by allowing movement of materials by barge instead of plane. This could be a good foundation for a surface transportation link between Cook Inlet and Bristol Bay, which would help economic development of the entire region.
- We need more people to work, making new roads, access road to new village site. Access road to new mines so more could get jobs.
- We need construction of new roads to areas where resources would support the construction and maintenance of new roads via tolls.
- I favor construction of roads into areas that could produce timber, minerals, and places to live. New access roads to natural resource areas.
- Access is an issue that needs to be stressed. Much work has been done by the Department of Natural Resources in mapping the location of oil, gas, and mineral prospects throughout Alaska. The ability to tap these resources is of vital importance for Alaskans.
- The lack of roads is a serious impediment to the mineral and tourist industries. Industry investments have been significantly higher in those areas with road access. Road access is a major cost during exploration and has an even greater impact when the mine is in operation.
- A major problem is the lack of access (transportation infrastructure) to support mineral exploration: The infrastructure on the Seward Peninsula (Nome and environs) is badly broken. Spur roads are in bad shape. This impacts the corporation's ability to promote mineral exploration in the area. The spur roads out from Nome are not just for recreation; they're crucial for economic development. There, mining is very important; Seward Peninsula has no fish, timber, or oil. If the roads don't let potential investors get to the mineral deposits, helicopters cost \$1600 an hour, and the regional corporation has to pay that! Fixing up the area roads even to the end of the spur roads is important for economic development. There have been times when the Bering Straits Corporation itself has fixed up a road to provide needed access, when DOT hasn't done it.
- Don't abandon the transportation corridor to the coalfields. Access to resources is necessary. Federal designation of lands locks up land unnecessarily.
- Also it's important to access mineral resource areas which are not economically developable until transportation systems are working.
- The Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Commerce & Economic Development should be given a voice in saying how best to provide road access to the State's resources.
- Open up Western Alaska (Northern Region) to resource development (roads and/or railroad).
- We need transportation routes and modes to serve mineral resource development.
- Develop access to Alaska's resources.
- Provide access to all resources—water, minerals, timber, fish, gravel, sand, recreation viewing, air space, fossil fuel, geothermal energy, land, and etc.
- I suggest there be a general plan to reconstruct the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Glennallen, similar to what ADOT has done on the Seward Highway. This section of road is hampering the growth of Alaska.
- Tourism out here (bush area) would also benefit greatly from some inexpensive transportation.





- The State should start funding rural roads that would bring economic value to immediate communities.
- Without a deep-water port, Kotzebue could lose its regional hub status to Nome (e.g., shipping out coal from Cape Nome thru Nome rather than Kotzebue).
- Improve all transportation including State ferry service to communities who cannot prosper without it!
- A set percentage of all construction funds, say twenty percent, should be earmarked for new roads. Part of this should be earmarked for pioneer roads and reasonable gravel roads. Such roads are sufficient for most resource development needs and can be upgraded.
- I am against a road into NANA region, but rail would support economic development with minimal impact on subsistence and culture.
- We hope that the effort going into planning will result in actually building new access roads in the state. The public should help ensure that all logging roads are retained after logging is completed. This will provide alternatives for the tourists and access for mineral exploration.
- Need a pavement policy: a) Industrial rather than recreational use is important (Denali as recreational—though tourism is economic too); b) year-round use over seasonal.
- A decreased number of projects impacts Fairbanks contractors and the local economy. This should be considered in the “provide economic development” criterion in addition to economic benefits gained after construction is completed.
- Current project evaluation process doesn’t meet the goal to consider overall social and economic effects of transportation decisions.
- Make available to private individuals property along right-of-way for use as private businesses.
- If you develop a road system private investment will follow.
- Our resources should not be sold to the lowest Asian bidder. What is the hurry to sell off all our natural gas when my children will need it soon? The State needs money but we don’t have to prostitute ourselves for it!
- Transportation affects every aspect of rural Alaska, I would be interested in its link to community and economic development.
- McGrath area road from Medfra on Kuskokwim river to Nixon Fork mine was built and maintained during territorial days and early statehood, could be fixed up and used for transportation from mine (gold-copper, opened in ’95). Ore is currently flown out by airplane. Transportation by road to Kuskokwim and barge down the river could lower operation overhead cost for mine.
- Every plan being evaluated should include an evaluation of logging roads. The public should help ensure that all logging roads are retained after logging is completed. This will provide alternatives for the tourists and access for mineral exploration.
- We need roads in rural Southcentral Alaska, the fastest growing area in the state, that will enhance recreational opportunities, tourism, ability to manage basic resources, creation of new jobs, settlements, farming, forestry, commercial enterprises and hope for the future.
- Roads to be constructed that will directly benefit or encourage economic development in rural areas should rank higher in the state’s evaluation scheme.
- DOT should assess the existing systems, forecast economic and demographic growth, and discuss how these trends will affect the system.

- Dedicated rights-of-way for transportation/utility corridors is a basic element necessary for accessing and management of our resources as well as providing for trade and commerce.
- Without an economy that produces good jobs, quality of life issues are a moot point. We do not believe you can separate jobs and the economy from transportation planning.
- Pioneer roads will act as a guide to land settlement, management of resources, recreation, tourism, quality of life and more.
- Project evaluation criteria for roads and streets should be different for urban and rural areas. Economic development and public safety considerations should be afforded much greater weight for rural road projects.
- We need to bite the bullet in every aspect of fuel taxes, highway fees, landing/docking fees, user fees and an income tax! No more incentives to build roads/rails that are not economically viable.
- If DOT develops reasonable plans that involve industries we can build Knik Arm and Turnagain Crossings. Road access to Anchorage is really limited and should be expanded.
- It should not be a policy to promote economic development; the economy must be able to support development.
- The state should start funding rural roads that would bring economic value to immediate communities. Larger cities, such as Fairbanks, have enough access to recreation areas at present time.

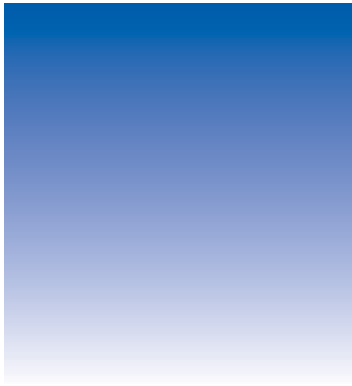


Bethel barge

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

ACCESS

- We need land disposal access.
- We need access to public lands.
- We hope that all the effort going into transportation planning will result in actually building new access roads in the state. Every plan being evaluated should include an evaluation of logging roads. The public should help ensure that all logging roads are retained after logging is completed. This will provide alternatives for the tourists and access for mineral exploration.
- We need access to new places.
- Need policy that easements across federal reserves should be preserved.
- Roads to communities in the interior are responsible for their existence and past development, roads to the southeast communities would provide them the same opportunity.
- Please consider something similar to the Alaska Marine Highway System for western Alaska.
- Improve access to isolated Southeast communities through adequate funding for the Alaska Marine Highway System.
- Institute Governor Knowles' plan for highway standards, then bring on line several new and upgraded highways: Petersville, McCarthy, Copper River Highway, Denali Highway, road to McGrath or Galena etc.



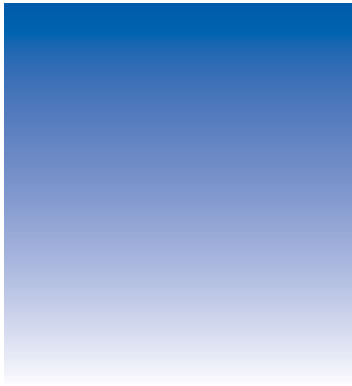
- Decide where access improvements are beneficial, and where they are not.
- We need to develop a comprehensive road plan that links all areas of the state.
- Ferries tend to be elitist and not affordable by everyone. A road would extend the tourist season.
- What's important is increasing access to other parts of the state and paying for road maintenance.
- We need to develop a comprehensive road plan that links all areas of the state.
- We need access to leisure/recreation facilities for visitors and residents.
- Reasonable access to currently non-road locations and increased and improved snow-mobile facilities.
- Lack of alternative road access is the cause of severe summer congestion.
- Everyone has always considered a road from Healy to McGrath as a long term goal. I think a rail connection to the Upper Kuskokwim River would do more to develop the mining and resource extraction in this region than anything else.
- The state should look first to what will be best in the future for the state. Would not roads into areas that can be developed in the long run be more beneficial than tourist pullouts and overlooks?
- Policy on improved access should stay consistent with regional considerations (examples: need for roads between Elim and Golovin; Brevig Mission and Teller; St. Michael and Stebbins).
- Construct roads into areas that could produce timber, minerals, and places to live.
- We need new access roads to natural resource areas.
- The issue of access provides serious consequences to not only the oil and gas industry, but to other resource industries as well. Of particular interest to the support industry alliance is the critical issue of access.
- Access is an issue that needs to be stressed. Much work has been done by the Department of Natural Resources in mapping the location of oil, gas and mineral prospects throughout Alaska. The ability to tap these resources is of vital importance for Alaskans.
- The lack of roads is a serious impediment to the mineral and tourist industries. Industry investments have been significantly higher in those areas with road access. Road access is a major cost during exploration and has an even greater impact when the mine is in operation.
- Focus on our lack of access (transportation infrastructure) to support mineral exploration: The infrastructure on the Seward Peninsula (Nome and environs) is badly broken. Spur roads are in bad shape. This impacts the corporation's ability to promote mineral exploration in the area. The spur roads out from Nome are not just for recreation; they are crucial for economic development. There, mining is very important; Seward Peninsula has no fish, timber, or oil. If the roads don't let potential investors get to the mineral deposits, helicopters cost \$1600 an hour, and the regional corp has to pay that! Fixing up the area roads even to the end of the spur roads is important for economic development. There have been times when Bering Straits Native Corporation itself has fixed up a road to provide needed access, when DOT hasn't done it.
- Don't abandon the transportation corridor to the coal fields. Access to resources is necessary. Federal designation of lands locks up land unnecessarily.
- Make communities totally year-round accessible by highway, either land or marine.

- Need access to mineral resource areas which are not economically developable until transportation systems are working.
- The Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development should be given a voice in saying how best to provide road access to the State's resources.
- Open up Western Alaska (Northern Region) to resource development (roads and/or railroad).
- Need transportation routes and modes to serve mineral resource development.
- Develop access to Alaska's resources: Access to all resources—water, minerals, timber, fish, gravel, sand, recreation viewing, air space, fossil fuel, geothermal energy, land, etc.
- Need more highways to rural Alaska in order to reduce freight or air transportation rates to rural communities.
- Construct new roads to areas where resources would support the construction and maintenance of new roads.
- Construct rural access roads.
- Make rural areas accessible and “the people to populate them will come”. Make rural Alaska a place where people want to live—with good access not with dusty/dirty roads close to which no one wants to live.
- The most important project is one proposed by others that should not be built—the road or railroad proposed to go from Healy west across Denali National Park to Kantishna. It would be extremely expensive and very damaging to that wilderness area.
- Maintain and add to infrastructure, including trails, connections to Juneau.
- Obtain road from Haines to Skagway to Juneau on east side.
- Expand the highway system, rail system and trail system.
- Have an interest in highway between Juneau and Skagway.
- We need Juneau access, the Copper River Highway—Cordova to the Richardson Highway or vicinity.
- The most important transportation project for a Juneau resident is the road tie to Skagway with a shuttle ferry connection to Haines off this highway.
- Juneau Access Project? Is there a possibility of shuttle (ferry) from Juneau to Haines?
- We need a road link to Juneau from the rest of Alaska.
- We need a road to Juneau.
- We need a road out of Juneau.
- We need a road from Kaktovik to the Dalton Highway at Deadhorse.
- Why doesn't the state get busy with the Copper River Highway?
- Do not fund Tokositna (Peterville Road development to proposed Tokositna visitor center).
- We need a surface access to remote parks—new roads.



Dalton Highway

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- Need to build new roads to Western Alaska and Juneau.
- Build Copper River Highway.
- Extend roads to other parts of the state not currently accessible by road.
- Growing population demands the highway system be extended to more cities.
- Need new roads in new areas.
- Keep private land from blocking historic trails.
- A set percentage of all construction funds, say 20/70 should be earmarked for new roads.
- Need access to remote areas of the state.
- Need railroad or road connection west to mine in the Kozebue area.
- Need new roads in new areas.
- The policy should include western Alaskan's need for a transportation link, such as a railroad to urban Alaska—especially to Fairbanks to get Alaska refined fuels to western Alaska.
- Need extension of roads to other parts of the state not currently accessible by road.
- There's considerable interest in rail links in the Northwest Arctic Borough, perhaps from the Red Dog Mine to Kobuk River villages. Some believe railroad access would allow access with some control, unlike the building of a road.
- Need safer air access to Juneau.
- Freight and passenger costs in and out of Barrow are very high. Barrow has a 6500' runway. Other possible access options: road, rail. Rail freight may get it to Barrow cheaper.
- Build roads to Cordova and Juneau.
- Build railroad and/or road to Bristol Bay/Norton Sound Area.
- We need to open up this state with more new roads.
- When roads are unavailable, as in Southeast, there needs to be other low cost alternatives.
- New roads open up country to settlement, which results in demand for other public service (troopers, schools, etc.) that the public (state) can't afford, to say nothing of environmental impact. Public is becoming more critical of opening up the country.
- DOT does not listen to public opposition to the creation of new access.
- The McGrath area road from Medfra on Kuskokuim River to Nixon Fork mine that was built and maintained during territorial days and early statehood could be fixed up and used for transportation from mine (gold-copper, opened in '95). Ore is currently flown out by airplane. Transportation by road to Kuskokuim and barge down the river could lower the operation and overhead cost of mine.
- Constructing roads that will directly benefit or encourage economic development in rural areas should rank higher in the state's evaluation scheme.
- Need basic transportation/utility corridor system.
- Expand the highway system to meet future needs.
- Dedicated rights-of-way for transportation/utility corridors is a basic element necessary for accessing and management of our resources as well as providing for trade and commerce.

- If DOT develops reasonable plans that involve industries we can build Knik Arm and Turnigan Crossings. Road access to Anchorage is really limited and should be expanded.
- The quality of rural life is not necessarily improved with increased access to a main-stream, road-based economy.
- I urge that we collect data and assess need for a train/truck vehicle route from Alaska and US/Canada to Asia/Europe via the Diomedes Islands by bridge or tunnel.
- It appears illogical to not consider pioneer access roads at this time. It is very important to establish a system of the basic transportation/utility corridors by nearly accurate location and construction of pioneer roads that will act as a guide to land settlement, management of resources, recreation tourism, quality of life (amenities) and more.
- Keep transportation system focused on already developed areas; don't degrade outlying, remote areas.
- Improved access and egress is also desired, for business, social, medical and recreation reasons.
- The Alaska highway system is very limited and needs to be expanded to key communities, i.e., Cordova, Juneau, and McGrath. Along with highway system, a parallel system of trails needs to be built.
- I was relieved to hear one of the gentlemen say something earlier about if a community wasn't unified behind wanting a road they wouldn't build a road. People in Cordova definitely aren't unified behind the Copper River Highway.
- Biggest waste of money would be bike path down Copper River.
- Make new roads as access road to new village sites. Need access roads to new mines so more could get jobs.
- Construction of new roads to areas where resources would support the construction and maintenance of new roads via tolls.
- I favor construction of roads into areas that could produce timber, minerals, and places to live. New access roads to natural resource areas.
- I am against a road into the NANA region, but rail would support economic development with minimal impact on subsistence and culture.
- Pioneer roads will act as a guide to land settlement, management of resources, recreation, tourism, quality of life and more.
- Coordination, consultation, and cooperation is a must between land managers before any road building is done over public lands—DOT, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Game, and Boroughs when appropriate.
- We need access to locations in Alaska that are of significant interest to tourists.
- We (206 signatories) in Hoonah support the pavement of unpaved roads within the community to reduce airborne health hazards, road maintenance costs, and impacts to water quality and fish streams. We believe that the state should prioritize this work (and in other small Southeast communities) before funding large projects, such as the road from Juneau to Haines or Skagway.
- Access into wilderness areas will negatively impact the area.



Gambell Bypass Mail

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- Fix the roads that are being used. Don't build new roads in the boonies. Don't build bike paths.
- Projects should not be named after living individuals and roads into as-yet undeveloped areas of the state should not be given priority over maintaining and improving existing network.

TOURISM

- We need transportation benefiting tourism, i.e., upgrading Dalton Highway, paving Denali Highway, river ferry boats for rural transport, numerous pull outs for RV overnight parking, more good campgrounds and well-maintained state parks like those of Canada.
- Alaska is growing and changing, and tourism is good business.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Kayakers near LeConte Glacier

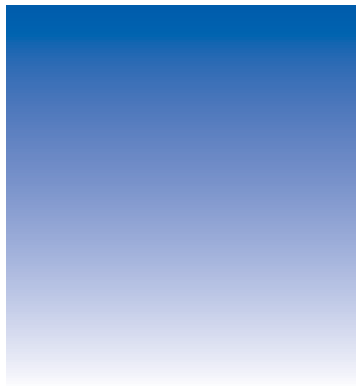
- In traveling on Alaska highways, there are very poor rest stop facilities if any. Tourism is important—rustic doesn't need to mean non-existent!
- Lack of alternative road accessibility areas is the cause of severe summer congestion. Hundreds of thousands of tourists visit Alaska each year, but they are crammed into a few road corridors with no opportunity to get away from the masses of crowds.
- Ferries tend to be elitist and not affordable by everyone. A road would extend the tourist season.
- Right now everything goes in and out by air, which is very expensive. Tourism out here would also benefit greatly from some inexpensive transportation.
- Adequate restrooms, pullouts, campgrounds, bike/ped trails along our highway system to meet growing tourism demands (both out- and in-state tourists).
- Minerals, oil and gas, tourism and forestry should be specifically and separately addressed in the planning documents.
- Rural communities are becoming interested in tourism, especially eco-tourism where there's economic benefit without destroying the resource.
- We need access to locations in Alaska that are of significant interest to tourists.
- Upgrading current transportation corridors for increased tourism.
- Transportation needs include cargo (fresh salmon, etc.); connecting villages for tourism; ferry system.
- Keep up with population growth and demand for tourism access that doesn't tear up their vehicles.
- Maintain what we have built with Federal dollars and plan for tourism.
- A light rail system would be a wonderful tourist attraction.
- Narrow roads are a problem—they're tourist obstructions.
- Explore railroad for tourism.
- How to get thousands of tourists around efficiently? I think the train is the best way.
- We should be spending federal dollars on the rail system instead of roads. Sixty-five percent of Alaskans live along the railbelt and a large amount of the tourism market is along the railbelt. It is the most efficient way of moving people around.
- Since most of the tourists come to the state by plane or boat, the state should be able to get some ISTEA funding to improve the rail system.

- Retain logging roads after logging is completed—alternatives for the tourists.
- The lack of roads is a serious impediment to the mineral and tourist industries. Industry investments have been significantly higher in those areas with road access.
- I am also concerned as we become a place for more and more tourists. We need to address the problem of overcrowded buses when the summer tourist season is happening as many of them travel around Juneau on our buses.
- We need roads in rural Southcentral Alaska, the fastest growing area in the state, that will enhance recreational opportunities, tourism, ability to manage basic resources, and create new jobs.
- It appears illogical not to consider pioneer access roads at this time. It is very important to establish a system of the basic transportation/utility corridors by nearly accurate location and construction of pioneer roads that will act as a guide to land settlement, management of resources, recreation, tourism, quality of life (amenities) and more.
- Every plan being evaluated should include an evaluation of logging roads. The public should help ensure that all logging roads are retained after logging is completed. This will provide alternatives for the tourists and access for mineral exploration.
- Consider bypassing communities where traffic congestion regularly occurs, i.e., Wasilla and Cooper Landing. Providing bypasses around these communities would enhance traffic flow and give tourists and locals a more leisurely traveling experience.
- Work towards getting tourists out of their cars and tour buses—provide paths and trails at all visitor destinations and rest stops whether urban or rural—encourage them to walk or bike from airports to hotels, etc. Of course many are too old, but many will appreciate the option. Support for more use of the railroad. Could increase use of trains as alternative to increased bus use.
- The needs of residents should come before tourists.
- Need coordinated effort among transportation, recreation, and tourism.
- Current project evaluation process doesn't meet the planning factor goal to consider overall social and economic effects of transportation decisions.
- Should dictate that cruise ship passengers use railroad.
- Need a pavement policy: a) industrial rather than recreational use; b) year-round use over seasonal.
- Suggest to the Feds that opening and closing the Tetlin National Forest Interpretive Center two weeks earlier and closing two weeks later will do much to increase the shoulder tourist season. Since this is the first "tourist attraction" one gets to by road in the state it says, "we're closed" when much of the rest of the state is wide open.
- RV barges already operate successfully on the Mississippi River. Could such a barge become a successful alternative between Bellingham or Vancouver or Prince Rupert and the various Alaska ports in the tourist season? This type of unit could also be used within the state. Such units are far more cost efficient as staffing is minimal and the passengers can live in their own units, tugs rather than complete engine rooms provide the power and winter maintenance is minimal. All that is required is a sewage holding tank, a fresh water supply and electricity. Really fancy would have phone and cable TV.



Tourists on Alaska Railroad

Ernst Schneider, Department of Community and Economic Development



- Build and maintain rest areas with toilets on all roadways.
- Make a strip of campsite tickets available which can be exchanged for campsite parking in state operated camps. These in fact could be used by any campsite in the state that chose to do so and then redeemed by you at a cost. The advantage to you is in the fact that tickets that are lost you never redeem and also you might have the use of someone's money for several years before the tickets are used.
- We need above-ground rails for Denali National Park and Anchorage to Fairbanks and down the Kenai Peninsula to Homer—and maybe even to Juneau. Trains without ground tracks. Clean efficient and easy for tourists, locals, and the habitat.
- Tourists provide a large part of the income in Alaska. Adequately maintained roads and adequate restroom facilities are important for the support of tourism.
- Pave Hatcher Pass Road. The Alaska Visitor Association wants winter tourism; this is the most obvious answer.
- Top priority should be road pullouts, rest rooms and improvements to enhance visitor travel (including regular emptying of trash receptacles).

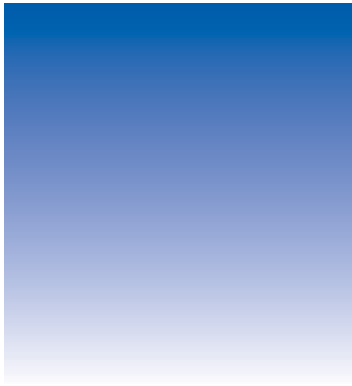
RURAL ISSUES

- This year Bristol Bay Housing Authority—20 units are coming to Togiak Heights. The school is planned to be built in the very near future. We are really in need of getting a road from Togiak Heights 2.5 miles NW for the purpose of new gravel pit, land fill.
- Togiak is on only 76 acres of Fed Townsite with a population of 800+. The subdivided Fed. Townsite is wholly crowded now. Togiak is expanding fast. Our present landfill is near the coast, therefore creating hazardous seepage to our bay.
- We need a bridge on Kurtluk River to support spring-time subsistence activities.
- The city needs gravel pit to upgrade low level areas for use. The reason being, the city had to get approval to get gravel from one of the N/A owners. Much of the surrounding village is tundra/no permafrost, therefore needs to use lots of gravel. The other option for good gravel is 5 miles west along the coast, but will need good road for access.
- Villages with airports often also need landing/loading facilities for marine transportation.
- Our village's landfill is in the safety zone of the airport. This should be given priority funding to relocate the present landfill for aircraft safety reasons.
- Develop and/or upgrade transportation systems that foster and support economic development, particularly in rural Alaska which lacks adequate systems.
- Need roads. The only access is by air, and it's too expensive.
- One of the reasons fuel and heavy equipment is so costly in the Kuskokwim Region is because of transportation costs. Everything is transported from either Anchorage or Seattle to Dutch Harbor in the Aleutians, then to Bethel on the Kuskokwim River, then finally upriver to McGrath. It has caused much development in mining and resource extraction to be delayed until costs are more reasonable.
- Need transportation in rural Alaska via applicable mode.
- Problem of fuel delivery to villages in the Northwest Arctic Borough which is brought in by air and shipped to villages: Bring in fuel by air to the Red Dog Mine, then ship by air to the villages. Need a road hook-up between Noatak and the Red Dog Mine.
- Cost of transportation out of the villages is high. It costs \$684 to fly from Barrow to

Anchorage round trip currently. Perhaps the cost of driving if there were connecting roads would be about the same.

- Cost of transportation to the bush is very high. Much of the money for a project often goes into getting the materials to the village, that is, the transportation costs. Now it's the same cost for air or barge, and the delivery time is one day for air versus two weeks for barge.
- Rural communities are becoming interested in tourism, especially eco-tourism where there's economic benefit without destroying the resource.
- Jobs in the villages are needed. Per the policy regarding access and economic development: remember that project jobs in the villages are part of economic development. The jobs themselves when villagers have them constitute economic development. Outside contractors take money out of the village. I support local hire.
- Rural communities need roads before worrying about maintaining them!
- Maintain current infrastructure and extend access to support rural areas of the state.
- The village of Minto relies on the Elliot Highway for a major part of its economy and livelihood. Residents travel throughout the year to Fairbanks for goods and services. They depend on this road to visit other communities and travel for medical reasons (i.e., medical, dental appointments), because it is cheaper to travel by vehicle than by air.
- Adequately meet the needs of rural residents, where roads are practically non-existent.
- We need roads within rural villages.
- Connections between metropolitan and rural areas need to be economically feasible to encourage buying Alaskan.
- Make communities totally accessible year-round by highway, either land or marine.
- Need road systems to rural areas.
- Need remote village water source roads, sanitation roads, remote village boardwalks for elders and children.
- Need more highways to rural Alaska to reduce freight rates to rural communities.
- There is a need for additional infrastructure development, particularly for roads linking communities together. Communities so linked together could then share airports, landfills, schools, clinics, etc.
- The Three Chigniks (Chignik Lake, Lagoon and Bay), Dillingham/Aleknagik, and Iliamna/Newhalen/Nondalton are three good examples of communities that could greatly benefit from infrastructure development.
- Improve transportation between rural communities.
- Let villages handle their own projects.
- Reduce transportation and freight cost to the bush.
- Policy on improving access should say consistent with regional considerations (examples: need for roads between Elim and Golovin; Brevig Mission and Teller; St. Michael and Stebbins).
- Rural transportation project needs include improved airports, roads to new housing projects and landfills.
- I support local hire, local training for future projects, affordable air transportation.
- Extend affordable transportation to all parts of the state.





- In Southeast Alaska, inability to get into and out of communities when so desired.
- Very little if any consideration has been given to dust abatement on “farm to market” rural dirt/gravel roads and small town streets.
- Shipping has been the main cause of high cost of merchandise.
- A priority should be improving and maintaining transportation infrastructure in rural Alaska.
- The state doesn’t take responsibility for any roads on St. George. They should maintain the road from the village to the airport to the airport/port. The road was recently upgraded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Right now everything goes in and out by air, which is very expensive. Tourism out here should also greatly benefit from some inexpensive transportation.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Small airport in Interior Alaska

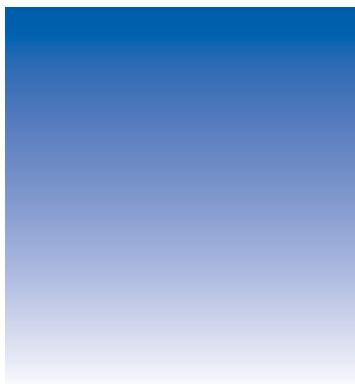
- Make rural areas accessible and the people to populate them will come. Make rural Alaska a place where people want to live with good access not with dusty dirty roads close to which no one wants to live.
- Boardwalks in Kasigluk are in terrible condition and really need to be upgraded. Boardwalks are less expensive and work better on the tundra than roads, but finding funds for boardwalks is very very difficult.
- We need to make sure all rural roads and trails are wide enough and safe for transportation.
- Upgrade rural airports or build new ones. Improve rural roads.
- Rural areas need better grip on sea transportation (ferry).
- STIP process. It’s hard to get a piece of paper (a project nomination form) out of a village. Village projects score so low they’re not going to be in the STIP.
- Develop a way to prioritize projects relative to a community. In many rural communities, one new road could greatly enhance the comfort and quality of life compared to several new roads in metropolitan areas.
- What’s needed are local road upgrades and airports in rural communities.
- Increase state ferry traffic to out locales such as Unalaska/Dutch Harbor.
- The state should start funding rural roads that would bring economic value to immediate communities. Larger cities, such as Fairbanks, have enough access to recreation areas at present time.
- Must change Capital Improvement Program funding formula. Remote villages receive 1.0 percent; urban centers receive 99 percent. Gas tax for roads is not accounted for in remote villages.
- A priority should be installing, maintenance and upkeep of off-highway city roads, boat harbor, dock.
- Rural people’s views should be included in transportation planning for the state.
- There’s a disparity between funding for urban and rural roads (capital and maintenance).
- We need access to remote areas of the state.
- Enclosed is a copy of a resolution, passed March 17, 1997, by the Yukon Tanana Subregional Advisory board requesting “Elliott Highway Improvements.”

- We need faster marine service to villages.
- Parking space is a real problem in Barrow, both for cars and snowmachines.
- Improve road grader or pave rural road system in Southeast Alaska especially on Prince of Wales Islands.
- Services provided by a port and airport has great impact on cost of living in rural communities.
- Without a lower cost transportation system to cut the cost of living in Kotzebue, it will become too expensive to live. We need to make a new deep water port with a new airport down the coast with a fuel tank farm.
- We need magnetic levitation and other cutting edge transportation technologies as applied to the bush.
- Rural transportation projects needs to include improved airports, roads to new housing projects and landfills.
- Why does DOT/PF use maintenance contracts to perform rural airport maintenance? In Stony River, the selected contractor ruined the state-owned equipment and now the village must get new equipment: saving pennies to spend dollars.
- I support multi-tenanted airport terminal for Nome, instead of the current situation where each flying service has its own building.
- Develop and/or improve small rural airport in Southeast Alaska with navigation-aids, Global Positioning System, lights, and expanded and longer runways.
- It should be possible for a pilot to taxi his airplane from the landing strip up to the village. Normally the pilot must walk two to five miles.
- We need transportation between all Alaska communities.
- Because aviation is so important to transportation in this state, priority should be given to improve rural airports and landing strips. Many villages have been waiting for years for improved lighting.
- Update local or “bush” airports.
- Lengthen Koyuk Airport to 3500’ to handle a D-D6 aircraft, which is often required to haul in building supplies. There are too many transfers of cargo between modes today.
- Freight and passenger costs in and out of Barrow are very high. Barrow has a 6500’ runway. Other possible options: road, rail. Rail freight may get it to Barrow cheaper.
- There is a need in the North Slope Borough for more area transit vans. The Homemakers program is getting a van. DOT staff told me than coordinated transportation is regarded in the project evaluation criteria.
- Getting fuel by barge in Barrow. It comes right to beach; it doesn’t require leighterage, as in Kotzebue. The Native Corporation in Barrow has its own barge. The Crowley barge still comes to Barrow once a year, in the summertime. The barge has lumber, vehicles, etc. Groceries are all flown in. North Star used to come in with a freighter, run by BIA; it required leighterage since it was an ocean-going ship.
- We 206 signatories in Hoonah support the pavement of unpaved roads within the communities to reduce airborne health hazards, road maintenance costs, and impacts to water quality and fish streams. We believe that the state should prioritize this work (and in other small SE communities) before funding large projects, such as the road from Juneau to Haines or Skagway.



Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Boardwalk in Tununak



- I wish the cost of flying to bush Alaska was not so high.
- Need greater emphasis on marine transportation to rural Alaska.
- A greater consideration for partnering with local government should be included. Local contribution to the project should be weighted higher.
- Having small communities donate right of way and perform maintenance is wrong. This scoring criteria hurts rural areas. Material donation criterion is bad also. These issues must be resolved in order to have a system that prioritizes projects on need rather than saddle local communities with burdens they cannot perform.
- I do not like rural Alaska community needs to be excluded. We all work hard filling out the project nomination forms because there is a genuine need for transportation access. It seems like no matter what we do, the urban residents of the state get what they want. When rural communities ask for a project, DOT should check out the communities to determine if this is a real need. Which there usually is.



Eagle airstrip

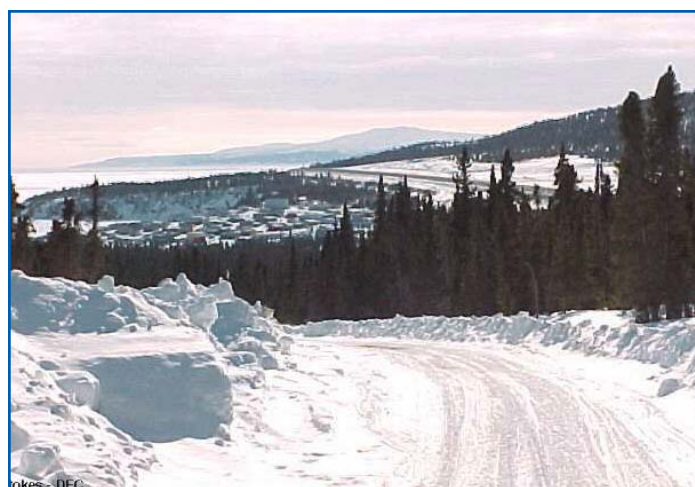
- Need to insure that projects in rural Alaska do not compete directly with the large urban centers.
- Villages, always low priority!
- Need coordination of DOT/PF rural transportation projects with village safe water construction schedules.
- I would like to see more rural projects in budget.
- Airports are built too far away from rural villages. Need wind-break at rural villages, someplace to keep out of the cold.
- Since aviation is the only mode of access in the majority of rural communities, reliable and safe overland access to airports is critical to the prompt delivery of health care and thus should be accorded a higher project evaluation score.

- A uniform statewide Force Account Policy should be developed. This would allow local governments to build their infrastructure; villages to hire and train their own workforce; local economies are infused with cash; project control remains with local government.
- We recommend that the ranking on Health and Quality of Life be raised to five in project evaluation. Having access to these sites will help keep our villages safe from hazardous water and prevent health dangers.
- Roads to be constructed that will directly benefit or encourage economic development in rural areas should rank higher in the state's evaluation scheme.
- Project evaluation criteria for roads and streets should be different for urban and rural areas. Economic development and public safety considerations should be afforded much greater weight for rural road projects.
- We need to look closely at rural needs such as using alternative energy sources to reduce their dependence upon petroleum demands.
- The quality of rural life is not necessarily improved with increased access.
- Rural people should receive some consideration (i.e., dust control on well-used gravel roads/streets). Federal funds are available.

ENVIRONMENTAL/COMMUNITY IMPACTS

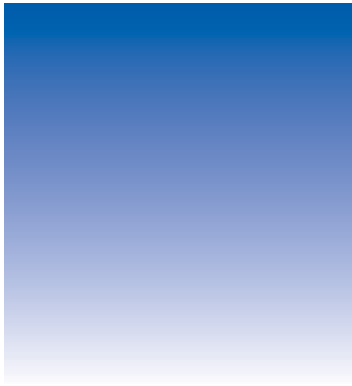
- Subsistence interest in Barrow is high. This needs to be considered in any transportation policy.

- Indefinite growth of any transportation system will inevitably ruin the Alaska way of life.
- Balance increased need with livable neighborhoods and pedestrian safety and alternative transportation methods (bikes, commuter, rails, etc.)
- Coordinate transportation and land use planning to anticipate a much greater ratio of public transit to private vehicle transportation. Choose and design projects to preserve transit rights-of-way.
- Air quality destruction by Glenn Highway traffic is a big problem.
- I am concerned about impacts of encroachments. Population growth on native settlements. I am not happy with RS 2477 restrictions.
- Proposed highways into bush Alaska could have a negative impact on subsistence resources. It also could result in encroachment on private land, especially trap lands. This could have a big impact on our villages.
- Roadless areas.
- Implementing “welfare reform” means that the people who can least afford to own and operate a private vehicle become harder pressed to do so. And they usually own the least safe, least fuel-efficient and most polluting cars.
- I am concerned about the effects of transportation on habitats.
- DOT should hire some sociologists to study why things happen instead of assuming the answer is to build more roads. Talk of the traffic “cloverleaf” is ill-advised.
- The state Air Quality Improvement Program (SIP) is not addressed by the Planning Factor analysis. DOT/PF is not putting enough emphasis on trying to achieve conformity for its non-attainment areas outside of Anchorage.
- Maintain and upgrade old and new roads without sacrificing environmental integrity; find common ground.
- Retain Alaska’s uniqueness.
- Social, as well as economic, benefits or damages of transportation projects should be considered.
- Retain roadless areas.
- Do not destroy the uniqueness of Alaska by building new roads and not looking for creative ways to deal with transportation.
- Growth!
- Are we paying attention to international treaty obligations in the framework of global climate change issues?
- Consider new road impacts.
- Proposed highways could also have a serious impact on the social fabric of our villages and we could lose control over how we try to manage our villages and their structure.
- What’s important are the impacts of improved transportation on land use patterns. This includes both positive and negative benefits on resource development, conservation, urban and rural lifestyles, tourism, etc.



Bill Stokes, Department of Environmental Conservation

Elim



- Preserve neighborhoods and provide multi-modal transportation and pedestrian amenities (i.e., bike paths, lighting, landscaping, and noise abatement).
- The most important project is one proposed by others that shouldn't be built—the road or railroad proposed to go from Healy west across Denali National Park to Kantishna. It would be extremely expensive and very damaging to that wilderness area.
- It's important to accommodate all styles of transportation without destroying Alaska—losing local character and community as huge road systems are paved in.
- I am interested in: neighborhood transportation, TRAAK.
- Keep scenic wildlife habitat along roadways.
- Your book's too long—wastes trees—study to death. Just build the Glenn Highway Bragaw and Airport Heights interchange before I sue you for idling 1000+ cars for hours in front of my house.



Ernst Schneider, Department of Community and Economic Development

Circle City

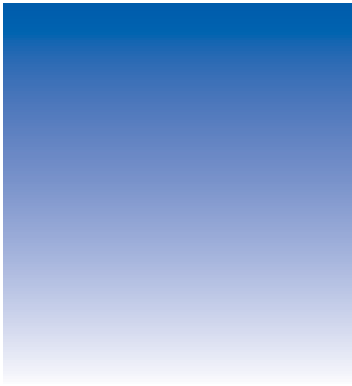
- How to maintain what we have. Access into wilderness areas will negatively impact the area.
- Enhance access to transit stations and stops, and enhance the quality of these stations and stops; achieve population and employment density amenable to efficient public transit.
- I am in favor of public transportation, as there are fewer accidents, less pollution, and less congestion.
- Avoid carbon dioxide emissions and global climate change.
- Reduce dependence on road transportation and its attendant dissection of wild areas and wildlife ranges. Alaska could lead the way in developing alternative transportation networks.
- I am against the road into the north region, but rail would support economic development with minimal impact on subsistence and culture.
- Focus on intermodalism and its ability to keep the community together. Portray a larger vision or goal by the transportation program than just paving or trails is important.
- We 206 signatories in Hoonah support the pavement of unpaved roads within the community to reduce airborne health hazards, road maintenance costs, and impacts to water quality and fish streams. We believe that the state should prioritize this work (and in other small SE communities) before funding large projects, such as the road from Juneau to Haines or Skagway.
- DOT should be able to do Environmental Impact Statement for \$100,000. Let the other agencies tell DOT what is wrong.
- Re: Planning and Zoning Board and the road collector system—DOT gives people driveway permits (on the Palmer-Wasilla Highway). Problem is gridlock there. Local land use agencies tend not to regulate.
- I am very glad to see intangible values mentioned in the Policy Advisory Committee policies.
- Many people in Mat-Su philosophically object to planning and zoning. Suggest that the planning board encourage service roads, especially along arterials and collectors.
- Development needs to replace the increasing strip development along highways. Strip development may be cheaper for businesses, but it's not aesthetically pleasing.

- Local Improvement Districts (LID's) in neighborhoods provide the funding for areawide paving. These help air quality and dust control. There is a question as to whether there is rural equity in Mat-Su in this approach to roadway improvements.
- We should concentrate on transportation, not the environment or livability.
- Planning factor analysis congestion context: It is not true that over the next twenty years no one but AMATS could have a congestion problem. Expand that context discussion.
- Look at railroad: easier to maintain and environmentally better.
- Local (not just statewide) values and priorities need to be included.
- Goal: compare costs of different modes. Need analysis between modes, e.g., roads vs. railroads.
- Transit has a favorable impact on the reduction of air pollution.
- Congestion is not just roads, but aviation, AMHS, and ports.
- I suggest a policy that focuses on transportation's effect on people's lives. I support the mission statement's first clause: "the mission of the department is to improve the quality of life for Alaskans." This should be the first policy. Your workshop last year on "Walkable Cities," the USDOT pamphlet "More than Asphalt, Concrete, and Steel," the workshop a few years ago on Northern Cities—all of these are sources of ideas that should be considered.
- Need strict environmental assessment and review process for all ground access proposals.
- Our goal should be to adequately serve the people of Alaska, while protecting and enhancing the unique lifestyles that are possible here.
- Give more consideration of alternative fuels, i.e., in Canada propane is often just another pump in the line at a service station. With only about eight percent of the hydro- carbons of gasoline, it is much cleaner burning.
- Employee supports such as provision of child care or other solutions to employee problems are important in helping people keep their jobs and helping them to do their jobs right.
- Consider a training/apprenticeship program for chronically unemployed people as a source for road maintenance/construction workers. DOT could cooperate with other agencies such as vocational rehabilitation programs and possibly receive a grant.
- Our resources should not be sold to the lowest Asian bidder. What is the hurry to sell off all our natural resources when my children will need it soon. The state needs money but we don't have to prostitute ourselves for it!
- I think our most important transportation problem in the Fairbanks area is that our transportation system has resulted from efforts to obtain as large a budget as possible, and a narrow minded focus on moving people and goods. Our transportation system was not designed to enhance our community or lifestyles. In many ways, the existing system does serve the community well, but there are so many examples of places where money could have been better spent if we were not required to meet federal standards, or if money could have been spent for maintenance and enhancement and not just construction. For example on page 8, expressways are referred to as "improvements". In Fairbanks, the expressways have cut up our town, making it almost impossible for pedestrians, bicycles, horses, and snow machines to get from one side to the other. Even people in cars have a hard time getting from one side to the other.



Polar bear with cubs

Department of Community and Economic Development



- I support above ground rails for Denali National Park and Anchorage to Fairbanks and down the Kenai Peninsula to Homer—and maybe even to Juneau. Trains without ground tracks. Clean, efficient and easy for tourists, locals, and the habitat.
- Studies by the Forest Service have demonstrated that there is a shortage of roadless recreation areas and that this has higher value per capita than roaded recreation.
- A good natural (and perhaps cultural) history inventory of highway viewsheds would be helpful for identifying new pullouts.
- You folks build over-passes in far places and traffic continues to build up.
- Roads should not be built that would cause Alaska's character to disappear.
- New roads open up country to settlement, which results in demand for other public service (troopers, schools, etc.) that the "public" (state) can't afford, to say nothing of environmental impact. Public is becoming more critical of opening up the country.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Alaska Railroad along Turnagain Arm

- Without an economy that produces good jobs, quality of life issues are a moot point. We do not believe that you can separate jobs and the economy from transportation planning.
- Project evaluation criteria should incorporate community values.
- Planning documents need to acknowledge and incorporate federal language and programs designed to improve air quality and reduce environmental impacts of transportation.
- It is easy for the environmental groups to oppose the expansion of our transportation systems, but I do not see them offering real solutions to meet our transportation needs. Please move forward to expand our transportation system.
- Consider the problems of safety and access now present in "Glitter Gulch" in the Healy Canyon near the entrance to Denali National Park because of unrestricted development.
- Consider bypassing communities where traffic congestion regularly occurs, i.e., Wasilla and Cooper Landing. Providing bypasses around these communities would enhance traffic flow and give tourists and locals a more leisurely traveling experience.
- We need to give most weight to the needs and wishes of local communities, not just to the few developers with political and monied connections.
- All highways and bridges should be designed to not interfere with recreational or subsistence uses. For example, bridges should be of sufficient height to allow rafting, kayaking, and other boating.
- Preserve the unique Alaska experience for residents and the growing tourist industry. Many residents and most visitors are here because of the lure of vast areas of untracked, undeveloped areas.
- Enhancing urban areas with bike and ski trails for commuters and recreationists would discourage some urban sprawl and resultant commuter congestion.
- Address noise pollution from all forms of transportation, both in urban and remote areas-flightseeing, helitouring, jet boats, jet skis, snowmobiles and All Terrain Vehicles.
- We must maintain the sense of wilderness and outdoor recreation through enhanced trails, paths, non-motorized transportation and public transit, especially in urban areas and rural communities.
- If the public weren't such slobs with their refuse, the agency (and the public) wouldn't have to spend so much on maintenance, including replacement of bullet-perforated

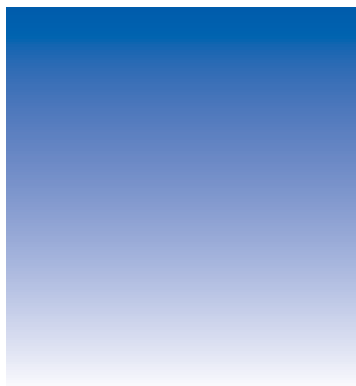
road signs! Better “roadside” manners or no more roads! How can we get this message across? Public highways are not garbage dumps! Prudent land planning, access routes to land disposals, impacts on wildlife and habitat, etc. need to be addressed before the bulldozers start, so that settlement and development can be controlled and adverse consequences mitigated.

- We encourage the state agencies and the state legislature to strongly support federal funding of ISTEA. We believe that this act goes a long way in promoting and developing a transportation system that will reduce our dependency on petroleum and thus increase residents’ health by reducing pollution and encouraging more physical means of community.



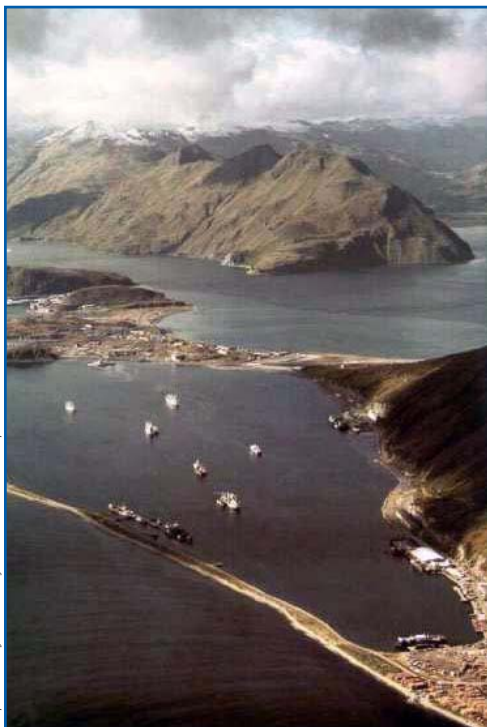
ENERGY

- Encourage fuel efficiency by designing system that reduces the distances people drive in cars.
- Note the declining availability and rising price of petroleum based fuels; proscribe combustion of hydrocarbons to avoid carbon dioxide emissions and global climate change.
- What do we assume our energy supply in the year 2020 is and are we making the right transportation investments congruent with the answer to that question?
- Are we paying attention to international treaty obligations in the framework of global climate change issues?
- Fossil fuel overuse.
- Our obsession with private vehicle transport and denial of fossil fuel limitations and dangers is exasperating. We need to look and see! Then compose a vision.
- Policy Advisory Committee theme 2: New economic realities should also include higher future prices for fossil fuels, and reduced availability and acceptability of combusting fossil fuels.
- Please add the words Energy Efficiency and before the title: Intermodal Connectivity in number 11 (Policy Advisory Committee Policy Theme). We feel that although energy efficiency is mentioned twice in the text, it needs more visibility as departmental policy.
- As a world we all need to be more fuel-efficient in everything we do. As a state we need to do the same.
- In Policy Advisory Committee policy theme #15 change “Encourage” to “Require.” Select nodes and projects to minimize passenger-mile and ton-mile energy use, especially fossil fuel use. Add: Include external costs of energy sources in evaluating life cycle benefits and costs of projects.
- The energy cost to use gravel surface roads is much higher than the energy costs to use paved roads. This should be recognized when adopting a paving policy.
- Give more consideration of alternative fuels, i.e., in Canada propane is often just another pump in the line at the service station. With only about eight percent of the hydrocarbons of gasoline, it is much cleaner burning.
- The crossings should make use of tidal generators or any other technology that will help cover the costs of constructing them.
- We need to look closely at rural needs such as using alternative energy sources to reduce their dependence upon petroleum demands.



SAFETY AND HEALTH

- We need to make sure all rural roads and trails are wide enough and safe for transportation.
- Very little, if any, consideration has been given to dust abatement on “farm to market” rural dirt/gravel roads and small town streets. Breathing dust all summer is very unpleasant to say the least.
- Keep current roads in good condition. Improve safety features of current roads—wider bridges, turnout lanes, passing lanes, etc.
- The old airport at Buckland has low spots that are hazardous during flooding. I am concerned about damage to houses.
- Maintain infrastructure, improve safety.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Aerial view of Dutch Harbor/Unalaska

- Money from the Permanent Fund should be used to maintain the safety of Alaska’s transportation systems. This is becoming increasingly important as Alaska’s population, tourism, and necessity for transport of supplies etc. are all increasing.
- Place guardrails on dangerous curves & other pertinent areas and keep Alaska Highways in good condition, especially Haines and Skagway north to Anchorage and Fairbanks. Top priority to main arteries or highway systems.
- Reduce highway congestion & improve safety.
- Health should not be ranked lower than economic benefit.
- For safety reasons—make sure all subdivisions have two or more access or escape routes.
- Increase truck-passing lanes on all current highways. Recreational vehicles and tanker trucks are causing increasing safety problems.
- DOT is long overdue on repair to Haines Highway—it is dangerous.
- There’s a severe safety (fire) hazard with the fuel tanks right in town.
- East End Road in Homer has lots of trucks on a narrow road.
- Private ferries understaffed, less safe.
- Policies need to reflect an emphasis on safety.
- Improvement of rural Alaska roadways will contribute to better health and safety.
- Stud tires are the best safety device on a vehicle to prevent an accident from happening.
- We saw this paragraph as an appropriate place to call out the importance of transportation to the health effects of air pollution caused by the transportation system, and the importance of providing safe facilities across modes.
- Please add the words “and public health & safety” after economic costs and benefits, in number ten, coordination with Land Use Planning.
- Winter road safety.
- Improvements to existing roads to improve safety and reliability and design changes to incorporate lessons learned so as to enhance safety.
- Roads are pretty narrow in the borough. Safety is an issue.
- Development of alternate routes to be available to communities in disaster cases, e.g., Burma Road south of Big Lake.

- Do dust abatement by hard surfacing gravel roads inside small towns such as Delta Junction. This should not be based on whether the locals can get an EPA assessment/recommendation or not.
- Dust control measures used in the area are working well.
- Right now the Parks Highway is much more of a barrier than it is a transportation artery, unless you are physically in a motorized licensed wheel vehicle. It is a major problem to cross that safely. Pedestrian bridges would make it safer.
- We are requesting improvements to the Elliot Highway. Reasons for the road to stay open are jobs, lower cost of goods, and health care. If a medical emergency should arise and air transportation is not able to land in Minto due to bad weather, an open road provides a way to transport the injured to Fairbanks.
- Spend money on safety items.
- No public transportation except in Anchorage. Narrow roads, tourist obstructions, speeding.
- In Southeast, a priority should be the ferry system and schedule. Also, updating highways for safety and greater numbers.
- A priority should be maintaining & providing safety on the Dalton Highway which supplies the Prudhoe Bay Oil Field (oil runs our state) and is having a greater increase in tourism, maintenance and safety on the Dalton.
- Expenditure Priority Order #1 Safety improvements on existing infrastructure.
- Important issues: safety, comfort stations, aesthetics, multi-disciplined design, and ISTEPA projects.
- Big Lake is concerned with developing linkages between roads for emergency evacuations. We have many people who were all but trapped during the recent Miller's Reach Fire... Any suggestions?!
- Government over-regulation. We have enough rules in place for safety. We don't have enough inspectors to ensure all air-taxi companies comply with current rules.
- We "206 signatories" in Hoonah support the pavement of unpaved roads within the community to reduce airborne health hazards, road maintenance costs, and impacts to water quality and fish streams. We believe that the state should prioritize this work (and in other small Southeast communities) before funding large projects, such as the road from Juneau to Haines or Skagway.
- Local Improvement Districts in neighborhoods provide the funding for an area-wide paving program. These help air quality and dust control.
- Emergency access roads are an issue in the Mat-Su Borough.
- I suggest a policy for *Vision 2020*. A person should be able to reach trails, by whatever mode, from subdivisions, in a legal manner, safely. Provide connections. Retrofit in some areas.
- The issue of safety should be a policy.
- Safety—often the obvious is overlooked. Signing is a part of safety, both directional signs and signs showing where things are located. Need to make landmarks known.
- Road striping is a safety issue. Need to stripe often.
- Safety should have first priority over business concerns. Safety should be in the Policy Advisory Committee policies.



Avalanche control

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- Project development: project selection criteria and alternatives should not be based solely on lowest cost alone. The best alternative may not be the least costly one. Should consider aesthetics and quality vs. quantity.
- Roads should go someplace (have an origin and destination) and be safe.
- Egan Drive, Juneau, needs calming, slowing and traffic lights to end the terrible accident rate.
- We need a policy to reduce highway speeds until accident rates improve.
- Provide free homing devices for all licensed snow machines. This could be done in conjunction with Search and Rescue. The savings in time and effort would far outweigh the cost of such devices.
- Regarding highway safety, if it is obvious that people living near certain roads are suffering from dust, that should be sufficient to do something with the road surfaces.

- Ensure that the roads we build are safe and maintained.



Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Downtown Juneau

- Since aviation is the only mode of access to the majority of rural communities, reliable and safe overland access to airports is critical to the prompt delivery of healthcare and thus should be accorded a high evaluation score.
- From a safety perspective, travelers are encouraged (just by the presence of rest areas) to stop and stretch their legs when needed, catch a nap rather than drive beyond their capabilities. Please construct rest areas.
- We encourage the state agencies and the state legislature to strongly support federal funding of ISTEA. We believe that this act goes a long way in promoting and developing a transportation system that will reduce our dependency on petroleum and thus increase our residents' health by reducing pollution and encouraging more physical means of commuting.
- Reduce speed limit to 55 max.
- One of the highest priorities I have is more bike trails and walking paths constructed along highways, and interconnecting communities. Justification for these trails is safety of bike riders, joggers, and

walkers and will provide alternate transportation methods for people who do not have far to travel other than taking an automobile.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE

- Develop a transportation media campaign on handicap access to transportation.
- A priority should be ADA (disability) access.
- Make all methods of travel more accessible to individuals with physical disabilities.
- I have concerns about the new paratransit vehicles in Barrow. There's no inside or covered storage, even in winter. The hydraulics freeze up and the lifts don't work. In addition, gravel gets in the lifts. While low-floor buses might obviate the need for lifts, there are no sidewalks and curbs in Barrow.
- Transportation for people with disabilities has been noticeably absent (lift-equipped vehicles, etc.).
- The State needs to do a comprehensive retrofit plan for its facilities.

- What has happened to the ferry discounts for the disabled? Many small Southeast community residents need access to Juneau for medical treatment. This can prove expensive for a limited-income individual.
- In Fairbanks (and other areas), the state-maintained highways have poor maintenance and often the snow berms create a hazard for individuals with disabilities. For those individuals who can use the overpasses, the berms block the entrance to the overpass.
- Lack of curb cuts. Many local government entities are failing to put in curb cuts. Can State and Federal \$\$ be withheld until this is achieved?
- The state needs to look at crossovers or overpasses. If a bike can navigate the overpass, so usually can a wheelchair.
- Small airports often do not offer early boarding for individuals with disabilities. Can the State influence these policies?
- Many small airlines do not have a means to board disabled individuals. Can this become a requirement in the State of Alaska? This also is a problem for ports and harbors. The State Independent Living Council as a whole felt very strongly on this issue and airports and ports/harbors should be required to have adequate loading devices for individuals experiencing sensory impairments.
- Sensitivity training in dealing with the disabled is badly needed. Lack of patience or knowledge of the problems of mobility is serious.
- The ferry system continues to ignore the problems in dealing with individuals with sensory problems. The ferry systems needs warning lights for the deaf and large print or audio instructions for the visually impaired.
- Timing of street lights. Although this may be a local government problem, please be aware that crossing a street in a wheelchair or using a white cane may cause the necessity of a longer period of time.
- The State DOT needs to come up with a policy regarding this issue and a plan of action.



MAINTENANCE

- Rebuild new access roads—we couldn't maintain them.
- Projects should not be named after living individuals and roads into as-yet undeveloped areas of the state should not be given priority over maintaining and improving existing network.
- The FAA road in Haines would be a prime candidate for chip sealing. The gravel surface costs too much to maintain and sealing would save DOT money that it doesn't have anyway.
- Fund only projects that can be maintained long term, assuming decreases in funding.
- Rural people should receive some consideration (i.e., dust control on well-used gravel roads/streets). Federal funds are available.
- Keep the streets/roads that already exist in decent condition. Repair those in the worse condition first.



- Maintain and upgrade present roads (i.e., Rosie Creek Road, Fairbanks, road from Chitina to McCarthy).
- Cost of road maintenance.
- When developing a new road system, devote the needed resources/equipment to maintain that road after completion! Merely to put in a nice, paved road is not sufficient.
- It is fine to pave rural roads, but these roads then need adequate maintenance.
- Fix our existing roads first!
- The way to catch up on maintenance is to stop building projects like the Petersville Road.
- Just because DOT has federal money to spend on capital improvements doesn't mean it should build roads if it can't maintain them. The FHWA letter is right on the mark.
- The state is negligent about taking care of transportation infrastructure. Why hasn't something been done?

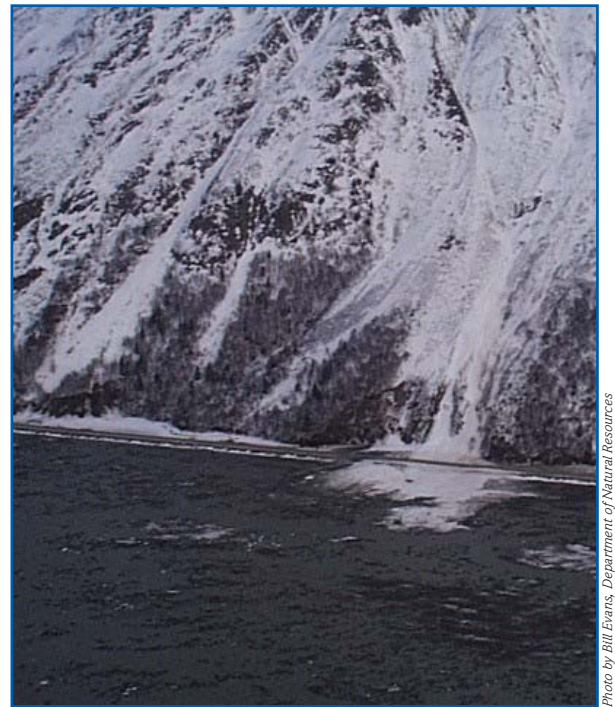


Seward Highway construction near Bird Creek

- I support maintenance of current transportation system.
- Find a firm, permanent solution to the maintenance problem before introducing new road projects such as Whittier access and Dalton Highway project, which will only add to the maintenance burden.
- Don't out-build our ability to maintain our transportation routes and facilities.
- Maintain existing facilities.
- Maintain our current road system.
- Our challenge is how to upgrade and maintain current roads and airports with a shrinking budget.
- Maintain present road system before building new roads or paving the Denali Highway.

- Repair roads from permafrost damage, etc. Provide good driving conditions for everyone.
- Maintain our existing roads and develop new ones.
- Maintenance and operation of the existing transportation infrastructure.
- Limit new road construction. Maintain existing roads and airports.
- Maintaining roads is most important.
- Maintenance and upgrade of existing state roads first—not just national highways.
- Fix all roads.
- Drop local roads from the maintenance system—emphasize inter-community roads.
- Upgrade and repair existing roads—construction of trails and access to recreation facilities, bridge across the Kenai River-Sterling to Funny River.
- Continue to upgrade our existing primary road system to the most recent standards before building more roads.
- Maintain the present road system and existing airport runways.
- How will the department respond to the FHWA letter that the state will have to improve its maintenance of the existing roads or face loss of federal funds?

- It would seem that a task force (on deferred maintenance) is only an additional delay to what seems to be a very pressing problem if we can pay attention to what the Federal Highway Aid letter said.
- Who would maintain the road to the new subdivision? The Northern Region area planner said that DOT would turn it over to the borough to maintain. Once built, there's nothing to keep it from sinking, even after using Styrofoam and dyebar at the freeze level in constructing the road. It's expensive to build this way but the price of gravel is about the same right now as building using Styrofoam and dye bar.
- In determining maintenance priorities, ask what is the most important transportation issue facing Alaska in the next twenty years.
- I want to see more equity in funds allocation. Why do passable roads in Anchorage get reconstruction while unsatisfactory roads in Homer continue to deteriorate? I favor the use of the Permanent Fund to fill maintenance gap and augment reconstruction.
- If \$5 million is spent each year to repair stud tire damage, tell us where the damage occurs and modify the law to reflect this.
- There is a disparity between funding for urban and rural roads for capital maintenance.
- We 206 signatories in Hoonah support the pavement of unpaved roads within a community to reduce airborne health hazards, road maintenance costs, and impacts to water quality and fish streams before funding large projects, such as the road from Juneau to Haines or Skagway.
- Mostly I believe that the roads we build should be safe and maintained.
- With the current level of deterioration of our roads and bridges and shrinking Federal participation, how can we afford to spend \$8,000,000 each year for planning? More is needed on engineering solutions to our unique Alaska road maintenance problems.
- Will the department just spend Federal monies to pay DOT M&O personnel to crack seal and/or resurface paved roads or will construction industry see some contract work?
- We need adequate maintenance of existing facilities.
- I would like to have input in the DOT policy statement regarding M&O and design. I feel we need to go back to basic road building and maintenance. Look at the Yukon highways.
- Our aim should be to provide better designs, better product quality and above all, better funded maintenance. The last is the biggest challenge because of the lack of federal funding and insufficient state expenditures.
- Consider a training/apprenticeship program for chronically unemployed people as a source of road maintenance/construction workers. DOT could cooperate with other agencies such as vocational rehabilitation programs and possibly receive a grant.
- What's important is the budget to maintain existing and new roads.
- Repair major roads/bridges (presently the Richardson Highway is almost undrivable).
- Need to maintain existing roads.
- Need improvements and maintenance of existing highways.
- Update local "bush" airports and maintain present road system.

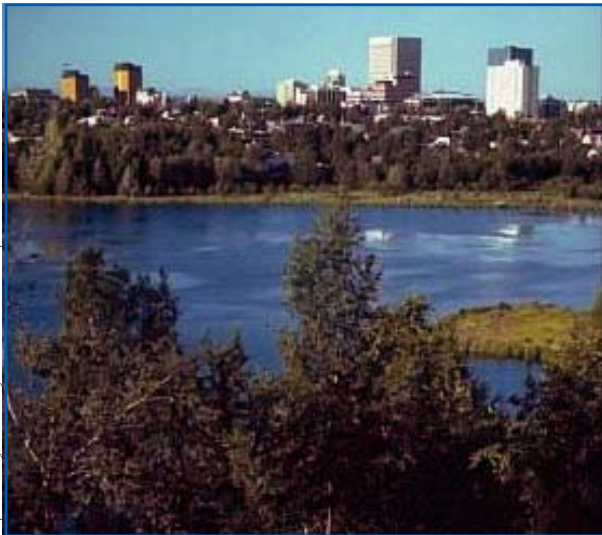


*Avalanche at MP 98.5
Seward Highway, 1999*

Photo by Bill Evans, Department of Natural Resources



- For roads, consider unit cost for M&O: buses vs. single occupancy vehicles.
- Too many bullet holes along the road. Offer a \$10,000 reward for arrest and conviction.
- Motor fuel tax revenues should support winter trail maintenance. Ice roads are not cost-effective, but snow machine trails are heavily used for at least six months out of the year.
- Maintaining existing road network and support facilities, waysides, etc. is more critical than adding infrastructure.
- Locate rest stops near some other “attraction” so that they can be maintained.
- Improve road grader or pave rural road system in Southeast Alaska, especially on Prince of Wales Island.



Anchorage

- Compare cost for maintaining one mile railroad vs. one mile road. For roads, consider unit cost for M&O: buses vs. single occupancy vehicles.
- Lack of maintenance for state-owned harbors is our biggest challenge.
- Lack of maintenance on Alaska’s existing roads and harbor facilities is the biggest problem.
- The state should concentrate on maintaining the transport facilities it already has, especially the marine highway system and air fields, with maintenance of existing roads as a second priority, along with trails, mass transportation, bike paths, etc.
- What’s important is maintenance of highways and trails, building rural trails and paths.
- Juneau needs better snow removal at trailheads and turnouts.

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

- Maintain and expand our infrastructure of transportation routes for vehicles, pedestrians, passengers over land, water and air.
- Need improved highways for routine traffic and heavy trucks; need improved ports and use of rail.
- Better infrastructure if you promote tourism! Be it roads, ferry, air...
- Our needs include financing, integrated system, coordination, fulfilling growing needs, cooperation, modern technology.
- Wasilla needs money for improved infrastructure.
- Upgrade high traffic intersection for better turning movements (and design new ones to work from the start), not as an expensive upgrade later, intensively upgrade key intersections, perhaps with grade separations, cooperation with employers for staggered work hours, etc.
- A pavement policy or regulation also needs to be adopted. When current traffic is between 100 and 200 ADT, an Interim pavement or BST should be installed. When traffic exceeds 200 ADT, the facility should be paved following current pavement design.

- I am interested in how to get funding for a bridge to Gravina Island where the Ketchikan airport is located.
- I am in favor of the Knik Arm Crossing.
- Need local road upgrades and airports in rural communities.
- Do not fund Petersville Road development to proposed Tokositna visitor center.
- We need a one-way road through Denali Park, a two-way road from Kantishna to the Parks Highway, and a road to Peters Ridge in south Denali National Park.
- Do paving and upgrades on Prince of Wales Island.
- Need more roads and more upgrades (pavement). Need good planning.
- Pave Hatcher Pass Road. The Alaska Visitor Association wants winter tourism; this is the most obvious answer.
- For larger cities like Anchorage and Fairbanks, we need to plan for truck routes that do not use internal arterials.
- Our biggest issues are how to provide the funds for maintenance of existing highways and build new highways to serve industry and society in a manner which does not injure the communities' life and vitality.
- Need new interchanges on major roads.
- Need appropriate funding for maintaining new and existing transportation facilities.
- Improve all transportation including state ferry service to communities who cannot prosper without it!
- You spend money on streets/roads that to the public looks perfectly fine and leave those that are in very bad condition as they are. WHY?
- Expand Wasilla's main thoroughfare.
- Upgrade existing roads/transportation systems to first-class standards; that is, address infrastructure development.
- Upgrade and improve the present road system.
- Placing guardrails on dangerous curves and other pertinent areas and keeping Alaska Highway in good condition, especially Haines and Skagway north to Anchorage and Fairbanks. Top priority to main arteries or highway systems.
- Maintain and add infrastructure, including trails and a connection to Juneau.
- I am concerned about several roads in Anchorage (such as O'Malley and Huffman) that need to be upgraded into safer roads (some need turn lanes, etc.) Can Federal money be allocated to upgrade these roads? What is the process?
- Need to develop alternate routes to be available to communities in disaster cases, e.g., Burma Road south of Big Lake.
- Spend money on safety items. Contact the rest of the Northern Hemisphere to see if they also see a need to re-establish a surface link.
- Need trails, new roads.
- Big Lake is concerned with developing linkages between roads for emergency evacuations. We have many people who were all but trapped during the recent Miller's Reach fire. Any suggestions?
- Maintain and upgrade the roads and ferry system we have.





- Since most of the tourists come the state by plane or boat, the state should be able to get some ISTE funding to improve the rail system. Driving is heavily subsidized by tax-payer dollars; the gas tax pays only about 30 percent of road-building costs.
- Expand the highway system to meet future needs.
- The Prince or Wales Island has a Forest Highway System of arterial highways. Most of the communities on POW are connected to this arterial highway system. In addition there are a number of collector roads that also serve the residents' needs. There are many logging roads that connect to the collector and arterial system. DOT/PF has upgraded a few of the arterials but in general has been very slow in upgrading the highway system on POW. The DOT badly needs to upgrade the POW road system so we can get to the ferry, airport and other ports. There are plenty of owners to partner with.



Department of Community and Economic Development

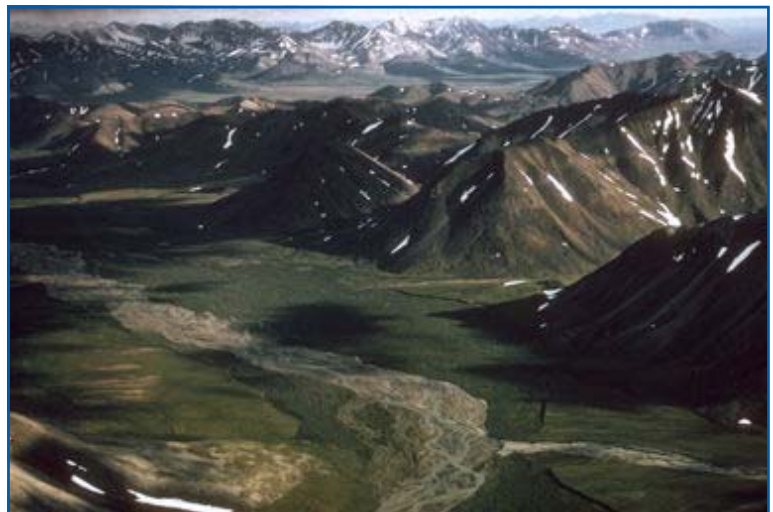
Hope Highway

- Ensure that logging road specifications leave the State with a 'highway standard' road base if such a road is in an area where a future road might be required.
- Extend Alaska Marine Highway beyond Haines to Valdez, Cordova, etc, with more frequent and regular departures.
- Juneau needs a design for light rail/mass transit.
- We need to open up this state with more new roads.
- Build roads to Cordova and Juneau.
- Build railroad and/or road to Bristol Bay/Norton Sound area.
- Maintain and upgrade the ferry system.
- DOT doesn't have a pavement policy.
- Regarding a pavement policy, when should a highway be paved? How does a route get added to the highway system?
- The Prince of Wales system should be extended to connect Coffman Cove, Lab. Bay, Whale Pass, Nakuti.
- We haven't accomplished much in 23 years, quality wise, not in the number of highway miles (in Southeast). For example, Egan Drive needs intersection (not at grade and signals).
- Juneau access is a bad idea, ferries and plane connections are enough. Use the money on Prince of Wales or to maintain the roads better.
- Fix the roads that are being used. Don't build new roads in the boonies. Don't build bike paths.
- DOT should allow the public to "weigh in" on the policy that reduced community project funding in favor of national highway funding.
- I support a basic transportation/utility corridor system for the rural area of the Susitna Valley and Mt. Spurr. Yes, the state should fund a percentage of these programs. The state's infrastructure needs improvement, and this improvement should be of high quality. The Federal government should help in many of these programs too, as should oil tax money. It is easy for the environmental groups to oppose the expansion of our transportation systems, but I do not see them offering real solutions to meet our transportation needs. Please move forward to expand our transportation systems.
- Construct roads where feasible to reduce the length of ferry routes.
- Err on the side of too little rather than too much as it can't be reversed!

- There is a need for improved transportation (air and ferry) to the communities in southeast Alaska, and to Prince Rupert. Based on cost, many Alaska residents prefer to drive, when travelling.
- I suggest that the need is to build roads, not DOT's TRAAK program.

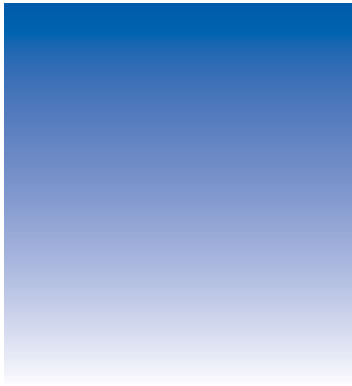
INTER-MODAL CONNECTIONS

- Develop a safe, efficient, effective, and economical intermodal transportation system designed to address the movement of freight and cargo. Special needs of Alaska's resource dependent economy must be planned for particularly with the reauthorization of ISTEA.
- Accommodate all styles of transportation without destroying Alaska, without losing local character and community as huge road systems are paved in.
- Better infrastructure if you promote tourism! Be it roads, ferry, air...
- Developing an intermodal transportation system that connects Alaska to Canada and the lower 48 states.
- Linking more geographical areas of Alaska by high-ways.
- Connections between metropolitan and rural areas need to be economically feasible to encourage buying Alaskan.
- It is important that planning be done with a truly intermodal approach that connects the various modes in an integrated system acknowledging all users from pedestrians to pilots.
- Return to basics—the department needs to concentrate on intercommunity transportation rather than intracommunity—the ferry and airports do that—we need to expand the highway system.
- Connect those communities to the system that wish to be connected within financial limits (to be determined).
- Maintain and develop inter-modal means of transportation.
- What's most important is connecting communities, for the common man (avenues other than commercial air).
- Constructing a road off the island to Canada would benefit a number of Southeast communities as well as provide Canadian access to the coast and provide increased mobility for everyone, mostly the average citizen.
- Using local maps, join the roads started but not completed, i.e., the Burn Land road in Delta Junction.
- Maintain and expand our infrastructure of transportation routes for vehicles, pedestrians, and passengers over land, water and air.
- Focus on intermodalism and its ability to keep the community together.
- Explore railroad from mines and resources to our port for cheaper water shipment, also tourism. Such a large project would require federal, state, and local support.



Noatak River

Department of Community and Economic Development



- Lengthen Koyuk Airport to handle a DC-6 aircraft, which is often required to haul in building supplies. There are too many transfers of cargo between modes today.
- Regarding Southeast Alaska on page 11, the paragraph regarding freight movement needs clarification. While it is true the interstate heavy freight is moved by barge lines, after reaching a port the heavy freight is moved by truck.
- DOT badly needs to upgrade the Prince of Wales system so we can get to the ferry, airport and other ports. There are plenty of owners to partner with.
- I suggest a policy for *Vision: 2020*: Link trails between trail systems together in neighborhoods. Enforcement of landowner agreements takes money. A person should be able to reach trails by whatever mode, from subdivisions, in a legal manner, safely. Provide for connections. Retrofit in some areas.
- Statewide transportation requires the grouping of the various transportation methods to attain maximum efficiency in transfers from one mode to another, i.e., a common terminal for air/rail/sea vessel/trucks.
- What we lack in planning, if anything, is a multi-modal transportation strategy so we know how air, surface, and marine transportation projects should inter-relate.



Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Farmer's Loop, Fairbanks

ROADS

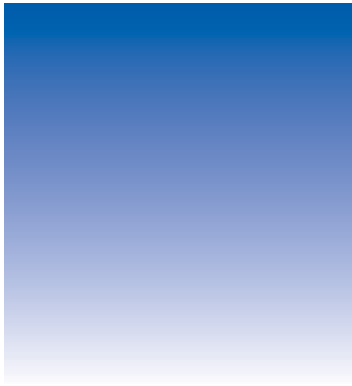
- The car has made our cities faceless, nameless places. Read Knusler who writes on this topic.
- Provide better roads, more rest areas on main highways and cleaner.
- Maintain existing roads and build new ones.
- Improve rural roads.
- Need roads in Alaska.
- Ice roads are not cost effective, but snow machine trails are heavily used for at least six months out of the year.
- Need roads, public transportation.
- Need more roads and more upgrades (pavement.) Need good planning.
- Need east-west road improvements in Anchorage. Need new interchanges on major roads.
- Need increased focus on docks, harbors, airstrips, and trails—less on roads
- The village of Togiak is expanding and will need road upgrading. Presently, we have a Village Corporation subdivision approximately 1.5 miles N.W. of existing town.
- Highways must be built not as barriers between parts of communities where the only option is to use a car, but as a complement to other transportation methods. The pedestrian must be strongly considered.
- End the current focus on north-south corridors in Anchorage; the real problem is lack of east-west corridors.
- We need ROADS—more and better. We have stepped back into the past-buggy roads.
- Why put an emulsion float on a 25' wide road bed? If we prepare a road bed for pavement it must be a good gravel bed—so let's make it a good gravel road such as the Steese Highway. Maintenance will be cheaper in the long run.
- Reduce highway congestion and improve safety.

- Not all tourists and people (Alaskans) who use the Denali Highway are tour bus people and motor homes. Right now, bicycles and tourists who like to get out of the mainstream are the majority. Alaskans also use this road for hunting, fishing and camping and need a place to go. Let's leave 120 miles of easily accessible road for this group of people.
- Roads are not the answer to congestion. We are going to have to look at mass transit.
- We don't need all these big road projects in the winter time; we just build the roads for the summer and then we have to babysit them over the winter
- Highways with traffic lights (Seward Highway).
- I am in favor of a railroad to the Kenai for bulk freight as opposed to having to rebuild the highways.
- I am against the road into the NANA region, but rail would support economic development with minimal impact on subsistence and culture.
- With respect to the planning factors: The Pavement Management System is unable to handle gravel surface roads. The department badly needs a paving policy. Certainly all arterial highways should be paved. The energy cost to use gravel surface road is much higher.
- I suggest there be a general plan to reconstruct the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Glennallen, similar to what ADOT has done on the Seward Highway. This section of road is hampering the growth of Alaska.
- I support extending the Prince of Wales road system to connect Coffman Cove, Lab. Bay, Whale Pass, Nakuti.
- The road system on Prince of Wales is not classified correctly. Major collectors should be arterials. Consider for the National Highway System.
- Prince of Wales roads all qualify as arterials.
- DOT doesn't have a pavement policy.
- Juneau access is a bad idea; ferries and plane connections are enough. Use money on Prince of Wales or to maintain the roads better.
- POW roads need paving. Big Salt Lake Rd has more traffic than projected. Thorne Bay Road has heavy industrial traffic (movement is 20 mph, half of what it should be.)
- Why not double-deck roads to accommodate heavy summer traffic and reduce winter M&O costs?
- The Tok cutoff is a very bad road.
- Compare cost for maintaining 1 mile railroad vs. 1 mile road. For roads, consider unit cost for M&O: buses vs. single occupancy vehicles.
- States down south have a big federal aid highway secondary system.
- I would like to see more roads, but political realities must be acknowledged.
- We haven't accomplished much in 23 years, quality-wise, not in terms of the number of highway miles (in Southeast). For example, Egan Drive needs intersections (not at grade and signals.)
- Emergency access roads are an issue in the Mat-Su Borough.



Klondike Highway

Department of Community and Economic Development



- Suggest discussing the Pavement Management System in *Vision: 2020*. Dedicate resources every year for the PMS. Annual set aside money for maintenance.
- Roads are an important part of local communities, important even for schools.
- Node development needs to replace the increasing strip development along highways. Strip development may be cheaper for businesses but it's not aesthetically pleasing.
- Local Improvement Districts in neighborhoods provide the funding for an areawide paving program. These help air quality and dust control.
- Functional classification of borough roads in Mat-Su's 2015 plan is different from the official functional classification done by the state.
- Commuter travel on Glenn Hwy between Anchorage and Mat-Su. Give DOT credit for rideshare program. If and when will speed limits be raised? Does the legislative make the decision? Everyone drives 75 mph on the Glenn. There are high speed limits in Montana and Arizona. There is interest in raising speed limits here.
- I suggest that the need is to build roads, not do the TRAAK Program.
- More roads are not the solution; capacity improvements aren't the solution. There is a need for mass transit. There are 16-lane roads in Chicago and Chicago still has traffic problems. A good example of well-planned road system with many lanes is Colorado Springs. This was the result of good planning, five years of planning in this case.
- I oppose paving of Petersville Road to access the proposed visitor center at Tokositna.
- McGrath area road from Medfra on Kuskokwim river to Nixon Fork mine was built and maintained during territorial days and early statehood. This could be fixed up and used for transportation from mine (gold and copper mine, opened in '95.) Transportation by road to Kuskokwim River and barge down the river could lower operation overhead cost for mine, where ore is currently flown out by airplane.
- We need a road from Kaktovik to the Dalton Highway at Deadhorse.
- I support the Copper River Highway.
- Due to our lack of infrastructure at statehood, we get a 90-10 split of revenues. Some of this should be used to build roads and non-vehicle trails around the state.
- Use the Alaska Railroad more efficiently. Ban Tandem Tractor Trailer rigs from Parks Highway; put them on railroads to reduce highway impacts and congestion.
- Reduce speed limit to 55 max.
- Construct roads where feasible to reduce the length of ferry routes.
- Sustain and improve Alaska's national highway system, including the marine highway routes.
- I believe the city is doing its part in "stepping up to the plate" on doing its share of road maintenance, but DOT is not reciprocating. DOT needs to adequately seal roads after roadwork is done to prevent wear.
- I am in favor of building some new roads (e.g., a road across Turnagain Arm to Kenai).
- Need roads in Alaska.
- Upgrade rural airports and /or build new ones. Improve rural roads.
- I agree with suggested change for surface transportation project evaluation criteria to separate the program for state highway projects from the Community Transportation Program.
- Problems are: overspending; tax ramifications of new roads; unnecessary McCarthy road improvements; lack of waste facilities.

- Use TRAAK and STIP funding and the Governor's directive in the 1995 Surface Transportation initiative. This must be acted upon by ADOT for every road construction and reconstruction project.
- Maintaining existing road network and support facilities, waysides, etc. is more critical than adding infrastructure.

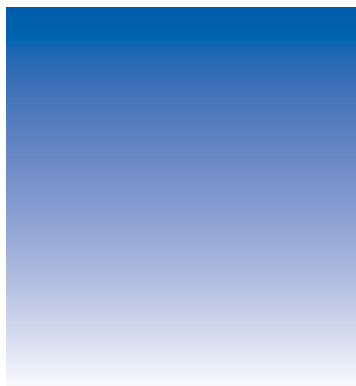
RAILROADS

- Everyone has always considered a road from Healy to McGrath as a long term goal. I think a rail connection to the Upper Kuskokwim River would do more to develop the mining and resource extraction in this region than anything else.
- I urge that we collect data and need information for a train/truck vehicle route from Alaska and US/Canada to Asia-Europe via the Diomedes by bridge or tunnel.
- The Alaska Railroad Corporation should dictate that the cruise ships fill the passenger trains at Seward first then put the rest on buses. If the cruise ships don't like it, where will they go? ARRC has control of the docks.
- Expand the highway system, rail system, and trail system.
- The railroad could haul materials and build a road parallel to the railroad, such as the highway from Anchorage to Girdwood, with right-of-ways for pipelines, telephone lines, snowmachines, 4-wheelers, and dog sleds User fee should be considered.
- I am against the road into the NANA region, but rail would support economic development with minimal impact on subsistence and culture.
- Freight and passenger costs in and out of Barrow are very high. Barrow has a 6500 foot runway. Other possible options: road and rail. Rail freight may get it to Barrow cheaper.
- Need trains to access Girdwood and Eagle River that are affordable as commuter transportation, not tour ideas.
- There is considerable interest in rail lines in the Northwest Arctic Borough, perhaps from the Red Dog Mine to Kobuk River villages. Some believe railroad access would allow access with some control, unlike the building of a road.
- What needs to be addressed is access to remote areas of the state; rural roads, airports and harbors; erosion; elder population needs; railroad expansion.
- We should be spending federal dollars on the rail system instead of roads; 65 percent of Alaskans live along the rail belt and a large amount of the tourism market is along the rail belt. It is the most efficient way of moving people around.
- We don't need all these big road projects in the winter time. We just build the roads for the summer time and then we have to baby sit them over the winter. Maybe the highway could be used to upgrade our rail system.
- How to get thousands of tourist around efficiently. I think the train is the best way.
- Some type of transportation could be beneficial in terms of reduced freight costs and economic development (mining, etc.). If it ever comes to that point, the railroad system would probably be more in tune to the needs of Bush Alaska.
- Explore railroad from mines and resources to our port for cheaper water shipment, also tourism. Such a large project would require Federal, State, and local support.



Alaska Railroad

Department of Community and Economic Development



- The policy should include Western Alaska's need for an urban transportation link, such as a railroad to urban Alaska, especially to Fairbanks to get Alaska refined fuels to Western Alaska.
- I am in favor of a railroad to the Kenai for bulk freight as opposed to having to rebuild the highways.
- Federal money should be used for the railroad system (not just highways). Ninety percent of the people visit the state by boat or by plane; they should be put on trains instead of buses because our road system is highly impacted during the summer.
- A rail connection from Healy to the Upper Kuskokwin River would make the price of fuel more reasonable (from North Pole or Valdez), plus make fuel to the down river Kuskowim villages much more competitive.
- Heavy equipment and freight could be sent via rail from anywhere in the continental U.S. or Canada via rail barge to Whittier.



Department of Community and Economic Development

White Pass and Yukon Railroad

- The Alaska Railroad should be given land in lieu of money, where practical, to clear transportation utility corridors and build a railroad.
- Any plans for Matanuska Valley to Anchorage rail or discussion of commuter issues?
- We need a moderately fast commuter train between the Wasilla area and Anchorage using the existing Right-of-Way and welded track.
- We need rail or road most to Nome/Kotzebue area.
- Since most of the tourists come to the state by plane or boat, the state should be able to get some ISTEA funding to improve the rail system. Driving is heavily subsidized by taxpayer dollars; the gas tax pays only about 30 percent of road-building cost.
- Will the railroad be covered in this plan? There is interest in rail links in the borough. Perhaps a railroad link to Point Barrow/Point Lay for coal. There's also a need for a port there as well. I understand that the initial cost for a railroad might be the same or greater than for a road.
- A serious cost study on daily travel to and from Wasilla and Palmer would show that a commuter train would be cost effective, safer and quicker. The total package including commuter parking and Anchorage transport needs to be included and coordinated.
- Above-ground rails for Denali National Park and Anchorage to Fairbanks and down the Kenai Peninsula to Homer—and maybe even to Juneau. Trains without ground tracks. Clean, efficient and easy for tourists, locals and the habitat.
- In the plan, need more openness from other modes to represent their interest—like Alaska Railroad and the Marine Highway System (there should be more on ARRC and AMHS in the plan).
- Should dictate that cruise ship passengers use railroad.
- Compare cost for maintaining one mile of railroad vs. one mile of road.
- I support more use of the railroad. There will be more ships in Seward this summer. Could increase use of trains as alternative to increased bus use.
- Look at railroad: easier to maintain and environmentally better.

- Goal: compare cost of different modes. Need analysis between modes, e.g., roads vs. railroads.
- Suggests a rail connection between Anchorage International Airport and Alyeska Ski Resort.
- Use Alaska Railroad more efficiently. Ban tandem tractor trailer rigs from the Parks Highway—put them on railroad to reduce highway impacts and congestion.
- Use the railroad to transport residents and commuters to Anchorage. This is a crime it is not done. It is pure backwardness.
- I am concerned about motels being built in the Ship Creek area next to the Alaska Railroad Corporation building just south of the port. I am concerned that traffic, including tour buses, will increase in that area and further negatively impact the movement of trucks and rail out of the Port of Anchorage area.
- We should tie the rail in with the ports of Whittier and Seward and the airports of Anchorage and Fairbanks. There should be a rail spur that goes to the base of Alyeska tram so people do not have to drive the icy roads in the winter.
- Commuter rail service from Girdwood and Mat-Su Valley could be a real boon.
- I suggest a rail connection between Anchorage International Airport and Alyeska Ski Resort.
- Juneau needs a design for light rail/mass transit.



AVIATION

- Rural transportation project needs include improved airports and roads to new housing projects and landfills.
- The old airport at Buckland has low spots that are hazardous during flooding. I am concerned about damage to houses.
- Service provided by a port and airport has great impact on cost of living in rural communities.
- We need improved runways, better local roads.
- Need local road upgrades and airports in rural communities.
- A top priority should be aviation safety: airport development, commuter/charter safety.
- I support multi-tenanted airport terminal for Nome, instead of the current situation where each flying service has its own building.
- Airport leases.
- Need increased focus on docks, harbors, airstrips and trails—less on roads.
- Why does DOTPF use maintenance contracts to perform rural airport maintenance? In Stony River the selected contractor ruined the state owned equipment and now the village must get new equipment: Saving pennies to spend dollars.
- Upgrade rural airports and /or build new ones. Improve rural roads.
- Bypass Mail. Significant money could be saved if bypass mail were flown out of Fairbanks as before. It's 8-12 cents cheaper from Fairbanks than from Anchorage.



Float plane

Department of Community and Economic Development



- Develop and/or improve small rural airports in Southeast Alaska: Navigation-aids, Global Positioning System, lights, expanded and longer runways.
- Need more flights during the day and evening. This includes all aircraft.
- We need affordable air transportation.
- Update rural airports and Alaska marine lines.
- Need safer air access to Juneau.
- Need for improved navigation aids for state-owned airports.
- A passenger facility charge is a logical source of income for helping to fund airport projects. Such charges cannot do it entirely; however they will help meet the need created by decreasing federal dollars.
- Government over-regulation. We have enough rules in place for safety. We don't have enough inspectors to ensure all air-taxi companies comply with current rules.



Department of Community and Economic Development

Float planes in Anchorage

- Most important issue is air transportation cost and marine highway upgrades—docks and harbor needs.
- We need to make airports fit the users; the trend is the reverse. The old Wasilla airport had within taxi range a store, bank, dentist, etc. What good is the new Wasilla airport? This idea does not need any funding, just a change in attitude with airport design.
- Because aviation is so important to transportation in this state, priority should be given to improve rural airports and land strips. Many villages have been waiting for years for improved lighting.
- It should be possible for a pilot to taxi his airplane from the landing strip to the village. Normally the pilot must walk two to five miles.
- Why does the Anchorage International Airport display art from various areas from around the state, but none from the tribes that were present in Upper Cook Inlet/ Anchorage area?
- The relocation of the airport has recently been suggested independently both by the City of Kotzebue and by the Northwest Arctic Borough. The airport is very close to town, and the public walks across the end of the runway all the time. Cost of maintenance of the current runway is high. There's a three-foot drop in the middle of the paved runway due to settling.
- Abolish the law that prohibits an aircraft owner from crossing the airport boundary with his aircraft. Would you buy a house where you had to park your car five miles away? That is how airports are designed.
- Update local "bush" airports, maintain present road system and expand into range area.
- Without a lower transportation system to cut the cost of living, Kotzebue will become too expensive to live. We need to make a deepwater port with a new airport down the coast with a fuel tank farm.
- Lengthen Koyuk Airport to 3500' to handle a DC-6 aircraft, which is often required to haul building supplies. There are too many transfers of cargo between modes today.
- Don't have airport managers appointed—go for most qualified individual without special interest.

- Airports: DOT has done fairly well in Southeast—built one at Kake, upgraded at Klawock.
- Political appointment for airport managers—at best can count on three years—makes it difficult to plan. Consider airport authority.
- I wish the cost of flying to bush Alaska was not so high.
- Status of airport project navigable, flood control, economic development.
- Built airports too far away from rural villages. Need windbreak at rural villages, someplace to keep out of the cold.
- In the aviation ranking criteria, erosion control should have more weight than a factor or two. If a community loses a runway generally they lose their only transportation link.
- Since aviation is the only mode of access in the majority of rural communities, reliable and safe overland access to airports is critical to the prompt delivery of health care and thus should be accorded a higher project evaluation weight.
- The weight on runway length should be 5. The expansion of our runway would allow material to be flown in instead of depending on erratic barge carriers as our only hope.
- I support the relatively high weights on the aviation project evaluation criteria for safety, health and quality of life, economic benefits. These same criteria are not weighted as high for rural/urban streets and roads.
- Aviation and marine facilities need to be upgraded and expanded to meet growing needs.
- Many small airlines do not have a means to board disabled individuals. Can this become a requirement in the State of Alaska? This also is a problem for ports and harbors. The State Independent Living Council as a whole felt very strongly on this issue that airports and ports/harbors should be required to have adequate loading devices for individuals experiencing sensory impairments.
- Priorities should be air transportation costs and marine highway upgrades—docks and harbor needs.



ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY SYSTEM (AMHS)

- The most important issue in Southeast is the ferry system and schedule.
- Ferries tend to be elitist and not affordable by everyone; a road would extend tourist season.
- Private ferries are understaffed and less safe.
- Improve access to isolated Southeast communities through adequate funding of the Alaska Marine Highway System.
- Increase state ferry traffic to our local area (Unalaska/Dutch Harbor).
- Please consider something similar to the AMHS for Western Alaska.
- The highway system in Southeast is the ferry system.
- My understanding of the Marine Highway is that it was built for communities that don't have access to roads or rails (like Cordova). It is turning into more of a tour boat than what it was designed for.
- Ferries are the most important transportation issue.



- Prince of Wales Island is one of the fastest growing areas in Alaska. We need daily ferry service to prosper.
- There is no future in the ferry system. Population up north will dictate reducing or eliminating ferry service as cost-cutting continues and private enterprise takes over the most profitable routes. Ferry costs discourage use by tourists to the detriment of Ketchikan.
- Marine highway system schedule does not work for attracting local riders—need a daytime sailing and times more conducive to weekend trips to/from Valdez/Whittier. Route doesn't make more money because people are shut out by the schedule.
- Ferries are too inaccessible to Ketchikan. Ferry costs are extreme. (Ferry is roughly 30 times more expensive than the equivalent distance by car.)
- The Marine Highway System should be expanded to include western Alaska. For economic development of any sort, you need to have some sort of regional transportation to get goods and services in and out at a reasonable cost.



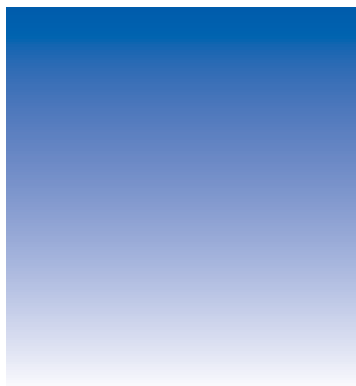
AMHS Bellingham dock facility

- The state paved the way for a ferry system; invite private enterprise to take over as soon as possible.
- Problem is the high cost, especially from my region either by air, land, or sea—need better grip on sea transportation (ferry).
- The marine highway is unfairly targeted by urban areas for budget reduction. Policies need to favor and expand those systems (like the AMHS) that bring in a high proportion of revenue per mile. Also policies for AMHS should clearly state or develop a system to weigh comments from residents that truly are dependent on the AMHS. Like in Prince William Sound, the routes between Whittier to Valdez (both connected to major transportation centers by road or rail) are much more convenient than to Cordova which does not have alternative surface transport.

- Priorities should be air transportation costs and marine highway upgrades—docks and harbor needs.
- Maintain roads and the ferry system we have and upgrade them.
- We need continued access to Southeast communities with the Alaska Marine Highway System.
- Rebuild/replace fleet of ferries for Southeast Alaska.
- Most important priority is Southeast Alaska's Highway System—the ferries.
- I would like to see tour ships on West Coast of Prince of Wales. Remove from office the people that want to take our Marine Highway away from Southeastern Alaska.
- The ferry costs \$300.00 to get to Anchorage. Plus ferries are losing money. Ferries are OK for islands but on the mainland roads are cheaper.
- I am seeking improved and more responsive Ferry System. I depend on the ferry as my sole means of transport in Southeast and to the Outside.
- I depend on AMHS. I greatly appreciate the unique service. Having US Forest Service people on ferries is good. Twenty hour drive to Anchorage only took sixteen hours this summer—smooth trip.
- I got no response after writing legislature, AMHS director.

- We need another *Aurora/Leconte* class vessel (235') to eliminate bottleneck in Lynn Canal.
- As residents of Prince of Wales Island, we are very concerned about the AMHS. This is the most important transportation issue.
- The most important transportation issue is the state ferry system and how it will affect Southeast Alaska in the next twenty years.
- I would like to save DOT some money on a project and put it into something like the ferry system. Sailings to Cordova have been decreasing because more money can be made from the Valdez and Whittier sailings.
- The ferry system continues to ignore the problems in dealing with individuals with sensory problems. Need warning lights for the deaf, large print or audio instructions for the visually impaired.
- What has happened to the ferry discounts for the disabled? Many small southeast community residents need access to Juneau for medical treatment. This can prove expensive for a limited-income individual.
- From its inception, the Alaska Marine Highway System was developed to be the "Highway" for Southeast Alaska. Recognizing ideology changes from administration to administration and commissioner to commissioner, users of the AMHS rely on the State to honor the System's original intent and mission. Due to competition for limited resources, however, the focus of the AMHS mission has changed. In an attempt to refocus AMHS to its initial mission, a partnership must be forged between AMHS, regional associations such as Southeast Conference and local communities. The partnership must re-establish the goals and objectives of AMHS and as one voice communicate the needs to the State.
- To help generate revenues in other areas, the British Columbia Ferry Corporation is continuing to serve alcohol, and will consider offering gambling in select areas of a vessel, from Prince Rupert to Port Hardy.
- Sustain and improve Alaska's national highway system, including the marine highway routes.
- There is a need for improved transportation (air and ferry) to the communities in southeast Alaska, and to Prince Rupert. Based on cost, many Alaska residents prefer to drive when traveling.
- The most important transportation issue for the city of Ketchikan concerns the Alaska marine highway system. As the "highway" for southeast Alaska, continued and reliable service is critical, not only as a means to transport goods, services and people but also as it relates to the economic stability of the region.
- Juneau needs better ferry service north in summer.
- We need more ferries with cheaper rates.
- Maintain and upgrade ferry system.
- Extend the Alaska Marine Highway beyond Haines to Valdez, Cordova, etc., with more frequent and regular departures.
- Accessibility for the handicapped on the ferries is poor. Bathrooms are far too small and there are few alternatives to the stairs (such as ramps, etc.).
- More openness from other modes to represent their interest—like Alaska Railroad and AMHS (there should be more on ARRC and AMHS in the plan)





PORTS AND HARBORS

- Need increased focus on docks, harbors, airstrips, and trails—less on roads.
- The city of Togiak would need a permanent site for unloading barges.
- Barrow needs a harbor. Barrow has gravel, but major funds would be needed for the harbor entrance. Rocks for breakwater would have to come from Nome. A study has been done; land has been identified. It would cost \$5-10 million only for the entrance. There's no money to build the harbor. There have been at least three different versions of a boat ramp built in the past at Barrow, but the combination winds, erosion and ice movement tore them up. None of them worked.
- Ninilchik needs harbor improvements.
- Use marine fuel taxes for ports and harbors.
- I support local hire, local training for future projects, and affordable air transportation. Develop our port—Nome is the second largest center of freight distribution in the state (Anchorage is the first).



Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Auke Bay Harbor

- DOT & PF needs to address the issue of local benefits in Corps of Engineers (COE) harbor projects at high level—not at the technician level. COE does not consider local benefits in their analysis of benefits & costs or design.
- Dredge channel to Kotzebue Harbor to reduce barge cost from Anchorage...so small barge not required to ferry oil, gas, building supplies to Kotzebue.
- A priority should be installing, maintenance, and upkeep of off-highway city roads, boat harbors, and docks.
- Service provided by a port and airport has great impact on cost of living in several communities.
- Need equity for pedestrians, bicycles, toddlers, elderly and people who do not drive cars. More small boat harbors.
- The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) should dictate that passengers from the cruise ships should fill the passenger trains (at Seward) first then put the rest on the buses. If the cruise ships don't like it, where will they go? ARRC has control of the docks.
- Lack of maintenance for state-owned harbors is our biggest challenge.
- Catch up on "deferred maintenance" and turn harbors over to municipalities.
- I support the following ways to ensure adequate transportation funding in Alaska: support higher motor fuel state tax (triple); double the aviation fuel taxes; ensure marine fuel tax receipts maintain current infrastructure; promote local governments to raise fees or taxes to maintain their current docks and harbors infrastructure.
- My priorities include: improved highways for routine traffic and heavy trucks; improved ports; and use of rails.
- Lack of maintenance on Alaska's existing roads and harbor facilities is the biggest problem.
- Need for deep water port in Kotzebue based on at least two things: 1) Now must lighter goods from ocean-going vessels to barges due to shallow water along the shore; lightering raises freight costs significantly (recently, this four-mile trip to barge fuel for electric generation cost \$400,000). The freight must be off-loaded a third time when

it's going to the villages. 2) There's a severe safety (fire) hazard with the fuel tanks right in town. In addition without a deep water port, Kotzebue could lose its regional hub status to Nome (example: shipping out coal from Cape Nome through Nome rather than Kotzebue). The port study is on the Corps of Engineering list that DOTPF maintains.

- There is a need for a port (in Barrow).
- We need to make a new deepwater port in Kotzebue.
- Front street in Kotzebue needs additional shore protection.
- Kotzebue needs an improved port facility.
- Docks and harbor needs.
- Explore railroad from mines and resources to our port for cheaper water shipment.
- Getting fuel by barge in Barrow. It comes right to beach; it doesn't require leightorage, as in Kotzebue. The Native Corporation in Barrow has its own barge. The Crowley barge still comes to Barrow once a year, in the summertime. The barge has lumber, vehicles, etc. Groceries are still flown in. North Star used to come in, with a freighter, run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs; it required leightorage since it was an ocean-going ship.
- Juneau boat harbors need expanding.
- Causeways to improve "shallow water" ports (i.e., Nome) would be a boon as larger ships could go right to a dock. A secondary benefit and revenue producer could be a small boat harbor behind such a causeway.
- New communities (like Whale Pass) don't get harbors.
- Boat harbors—marine fuel tax was originally used to maintain boat harbors, but this stopped when Dept. of Highway was changed to DOT in 1977. Marine fuel tax is not used for harbor improvements now. Thorne Bay and Coffman Cove did them on their own.
- I very much agree with suggested change with respect to Harbors. Standard #13 should be changed to Marine Hazards for Harbors.
- Need harbor at Barrow. Need the facility to start with and then maintain it.
- Harbor maintenance is needed. Rock cracking on breakwater.
- Need greater emphasis on marine transportation to rural Alaska.
- Aviation and marine facilities need to be upgraded and expanded to meet growing needs.
- The State Independent Living Council (SILC) as a whole felt very strongly that there should be adequate loading devices at ports and harbors for individuals experiencing sensory impairments.
- I am upset about DOT not doing its share on providing and maintaining harbors in Kodiak.
- Most important issue is air transportation cost and marine highway upgrades—docks and harbor needs.
- Aviation and marine facilities need to be upgraded and expanded to meet growing needs.



Elfin Cove dock

Department of Community and Economic Development



TRAAK

- I am concerned about the lack of pullouts along the highway through the State Recreational Use Area in Thompson Pass (Mile 20-35 Richardson Highway) and the increased use by visitors both in summer and winter.
- Most rest areas along the highways need to be developed; the toilets that are along the Seward Highway are despicable. Pit toilets are OK if properly maintained; need signs to notify travelers of toilet locations.
- There are not enough legal pullouts on Thompson Pass. We are becoming quite the ski community but we just don't have enough parking for everybody.
- Top priority should be road pullouts, rest rooms and improvements to enhance visitor travel (including regular emptying of trash receptacles).
- Need pull outs on Thompson Pass in winter. There is a lot of winter activity there. The trooper tickets people who park along the road but there is no off-road parking.



Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Hiking the Chilkoot Trail

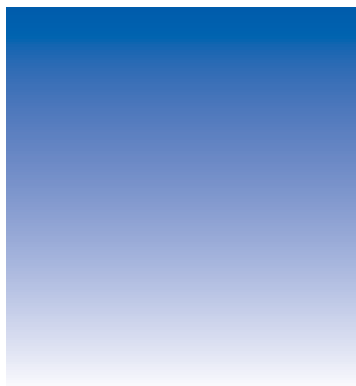
- I recommend DOT establish a bicycle/pedestrian working group to allow public input in creating and implementing strategies.
- There are no rest stops in the winter and few in the summer. There is a need for year-round facilities. Winter use is growing but rest areas are not plowed out. Also RV's dump holding tanks along the highway.
- Need a rest stop between mp 45 and 55—Hurly Creek Wayside. Would like to nominate a project there: 1899 Trail Head, a trail to Tonsina Lake. Put this into the TRAAK Corridor Plan.
- We need adequate restrooms, pullouts, campgrounds, bike/pedestrian trails along our highway system to meet growing tourism demands (both out-of-state and in-state tourists).
- We need access to leisure/recreation facilities for visitors and residents.
- Public and private funding for TRAAK and other beautification projects. Aesthetic value doesn't mean much when roadways are in need of resurfacing.
- Develop rest areas with public restrooms and overnight camping areas for tourism.
- Important issues: safety, comfort stations, aesthetics, multi-disciplined design, and ISTEA projects.
- We need to make sure our campgrounds are clean and neat for all, all the time and garbage disposers are available everywhere and picked up all the time. Also bathrooms at rivers and creeks available for sanitation.
- Involve people without vehicles in planning. Include plans for sidewalks, bike paths.
- New roads should NOT be built without aggressively planning and maintaining REST facilities for existing roads first and new roads secondly. McCarthy is an embarrassment and there are other places like it (or there will be) with present policies.
- There is no mention of building and maintaining adequate rest facilities along new roads or old ones.
- We need more numerous and better summer rest rooms and viewing pullouts.
- Please ensure erection of binocular logo signs at sites featured in *Alaska Wildlife Viewing Guide*.

- At pullouts, rest areas need more trash/garbage receptacles and collection frequency.
- We need reasonable access to currently non-road locations and increased and improved snowmobile facilities.
- Motorized recreational users need more representation.
- Interborough Trail System for Snowmobiles (ITSS). And it's about time!
- I'm appalled by the lack of awareness of snowmobilers' needs! You have a bike coordinator but no snowmobile coordinator. Amazing!
- Priority for legislature to establish and fund a statewide snowmobile coordinator position within Department of Natural Resources, Division of Motor Vehicles, or DOT. Just pick one and do it.
- We need snowmobile trails along main highways. Widen Tudor Road and make snowmobile and/or multi-use trail on one side, the other side another trail that could also be multi-use.
- Develop snowmobile trailheads and facilities, statewide trail systems.
- Develop a statewide trail system (snowmobile) to connect communities starting from Anchorage with trail heads along the way to connect to prime snowmobile riding areas (Chugach State Park, etc.) all the way to Denali.
- I suggest color coding sno-go trail marking; more lenient regulations for off-road vehicles on state roads.
- The state should look first to what will, in the future, be best for the state. Would not roads into areas that can be developed be, in the long run, more beneficial than tourist pulloffs/overlooks?
- DOT should go after the root causes of the traffic growth, rather than keep building new roads to handle the growth. Why did traffic increase on Egan drive 14.5 percent in five years when population growth was only 8.5 percent? That should tell DOT it's not making alternative transportation attractive enough (transit, bike, pedestrian).
- I have an interest in: statewide trail issues, bike/pedestrian issues.
- What are DOT's plans to work into the trails system on a statewide basis? We have a Symms Grant for marking a trail. It is a good start, but it is not enough to make a continuous trail system. This is especially where the trails have been chopped up by roads and developments, particularly property conveyances where we have lost right of ways. What can DOT do to help us on this one?
- The state shouldn't provide recreational trails or boat docks for the public. Leave it to private people. This will create jobs and also save state money to provide better roads on what we all pay taxes on and use. I don't use boat docks or trails.
- Forget "TRAAK"! We need to build new roads to western Alaska and Juneau and we need to maintain existing ones.
- Emphasize use of trails as transportation system. Recreation use is fine, but need access to jobs, shops too.
- You have some great historic routes. The Valdez Trail Association would like to help you locate and update them.
- Make building bike and pedestrian walkways a part of both new construction and improvement projects; A) Establish baseline to measure bike/pedestrian use; B) Provide incentives for bike/pedestrian use.



Trail near Port Alexander

Department of Community and Economic Development



- Provide for non-motorized uses in urban area—multiuse trails and outside urban areas—rough cut and signage of wilderness trails in appropriate areas. Land managers and DOT required to develop a plan of action for legal designation of trails.
- Trails and transit are transportation too.
- The governor's (Knowles) plan to emphasize trails and upkeep is excellent—stick to it!
- Expand the highway system, rail system, and trail system.
- We need equity for pedestrians, bicycles, toddlers, elderly, and people who do not drive cars.
- Biggest waste of money would be bike path down Copper River.
- Extend the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail southward to Potter Marsh and then down the Turnagian arm.
- We need more \$\$ for TRAAK projects.
- I want to make sure that DOT considers the bicycle as a serious mode of transportation in their planning for the state. Shoulders should be designated as bike lanes when new roads are built or when old roads are redone or widened.
- Why does DOTPF focus on trails/paths between cities when so many pedestrian facilities in local communities are unfinished?
- The bicycle is too often ignored as a serious mode of transportation. We should be making better use of it.
- Please promote bike paths as a form of transportation.
- We need pedestrian and bicycle trails and paths for smart alternative ways to commute and recreate.
- DOT encouraged the borough to nominate pedestrian projects, especially if the borough would pick up the maintenance.
- Highways must be built not as barriers between parts of communities where the only option is to use a car, but as a complement to other transportation methods. The pedestrian must be strongly considered.
- Along with the highway system, a parallel system of trails needs to be built.
- I am interested in the subject of trails, both as a recreation outlet, but also on a much broader scale: as a statewide alternative to and complement to the road system, particularly for areas that are never really going to have any roads.
- What's important is maintenance of highways and trails, building rural trails and paths.
- Maintain current road system with declining revenues and encourage alternate transport—i.e.: public transport, bicycles.
- The state should concentrate on maintaining the transport facilities it already has, especially the marine highway system and air fields, with maintenance of existing roads as a second priority, along with trails, mass transportation, bike paths, etc.
- We need better roads, more rest areas on main highways and cleaner.
- Motor fuel tax revenues should support winter trail maintenance. Ice roads are not cost-effective, but snow machine trails are heavily used for at least six months out of the year.
- Maintain and add to infrastructure, including trails, connections to Juneau.

- We need to make sure all rural roads are wide enough and safe for transportation, also trails.
- Maintain/improve existing roads, not building more roads; keep private land from blocking historic trails; encourage fuel efficiency by designing a system that reduces the distances people drive their cars.
- Right now the Parks Highway is much more of a barrier than it is a transportation artery, unless you are physically in a motorized licensed wheel vehicle. It is a major problem to cross that safely. Pedestrian bridges would make it more safe.
- Traffic/congestion/wear and tear on existing roads—need trails, new roads.
- Maintain and expand our infrastructure of transportation routes for vehicles, pedestrians, and passengers over land, water, and air.
- Need increased focus on docks, harbors, airstrips, and trails—less on roads.
- We need a moderately fast commuter train between the Wasilla area and Anchorage using the existing Right-of-Way and welded track. Connect the bike trails in Anchorage. Provide rail or road west to Nome/Kotzebue areas.
- Kotzebue needs a recreational trail east of town.
- Tourists provide a large part of the income in Alaska. Adequately maintained roads and adequate restroom facilities are important for the support of tourism.
- Build and maintain rest areas with toilets on all roadways.
- I support improvement, upkeep, maintenance of state-owned roadside parks. I believe that these could be better managed by the Department of Transportation than by State Parks and they should be eligible under TRAAK for some funding. These units are a necessity in areas where commercial entities are not available and if properly equipped and maintained (included porta potties) could and should reduce litter in the State. A number of States and Provinces have successfully turned like facilities over to private concessionaires for management. However if such is the case these concessionaires must honor State-issued discount passes.
- Provide free homing devices for all licensed snow machines. This could be done in conjunction with Search and Rescue. The savings in time and effort would far outweigh the cost of such devices.
- Install permanent trail markers on the tundra (i.e., the Nenana Ice Classic Tripod type of things). These could have solar powered beacon attached or perhaps a low range homing signal to go with (suggested homing devices for all licensed snow machines).
- I would suggest a policy that focuses on transportation's effect on people's lives. I support the mission statement's first clause; 'the mission of the department is to improve the quality of life for Alaskans'. This should be the first policy. Your workshop last year on 'Walkable Cities,' the USDOT pamphlet 'More than Asphalt, Concrete, and Steel', the workshop a few years ago on Northern Cities—all of these are sources of ideas that should be considered.
- Juneau needs better snow removal at trailheads and turnouts.
- I would like to see money spent for maintenance and enhancement and not just construction. For example on p.8, expressways are referred to as 'improvements'. In Fairbanks, the expressways have cut up our town, making it almost impossible for



Snowmobiles on the Yentna River

Department of Community and Economic Development



pedestrians, bicycles, horses, and snowmachines to get from one side to the other. Even people in cars have a hard time getting from one side to the other.

- I commend corridor assessments (looking at TRAAK opportunities on national corridors, NHS routes).
- For the TRAAK program, need to see the big picture. What should TRAAK be designed to do? (Safe community bike trails, etc.?) Need a long term vision, plan. This should be reflected in the criteria, which would reward projects accordingly.
- Need regional planning to set project priorities for TRAAK projects.
- No focus, need transportation planning. Too much money spent on bicycles and pedestrians. Need to consider origins and destinations. (Bike/pedestrian facilities don't get people to major places.)
- Reasonable bathroom facilities are hard to find along Alaska's highways. Bathrooms don't have to be fancy or expensive; well-vented outdoor/decomposing toilets that afford some privacy are simple and inexpensive solutions.

Ernst Schneider, Department of Community and Economic Development

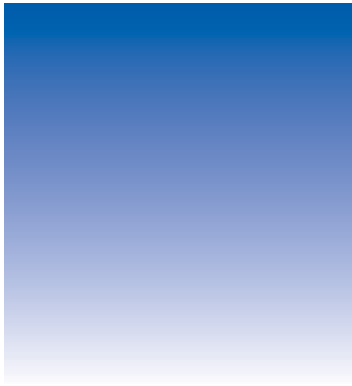


Traveling Alaska's highways

- We need pedestrian facilities including: trails, sidewalks, trailhead parking for both summer and winter, pedestrian crossings on Egan Drive and light at Mapco Intersection in Juneau.
- We need a policy to study and address pedestrian needs, a policy to provide more parking and trails along our highways for subsistence and other users, and a policy to provide sewage disposal facilities and/or instructions at highway turnouts.
- We need a policy to give higher priority to pedestrian facilities and a policy to keeping pullouts and trailheads plowed in the winter.
- We need more places to stop along highways.
- We need a policy to study and provide alternatives to automobiles in all our communities.
- We need connector bike paths and sidewalks.
- We need more turnouts and parking needed on all highways for hunters, berry pickers and other roadside users.
- Consider development of a statewide multi-use trail system as a transportation enhancement.
- Provide trails and bike paths on ANY new construction—NO NET LOSS.
- The Alaska Highway system is very limited and needs to be expanded to key communities, i.e., Cordova, Juneau, and McGrath. Along with the highway system, a parallel system of trails needs to be built.
- From a safety perspective, travelers are encouraged (just by the presence of rest areas) to stop and stretch their legs when needed, catch a nap rather than drive beyond their capabilities. Please construct rest areas.
- We must maintain that sense of wilderness and outdoor recreation through enhanced trails, paths, non-motorized transportation and public transit, especially in urban areas and rural communities.
- Enhancing urban areas with bike and ski trails for commuters and recreationists would discourage some urban sprawl and resultant commuter paths for commuting and recreating.
- Maintaining existing road network and support facilities, waysides, etc. is more critical than adding infrastructure.

- More rural communities need safe non—motorized paths for commuting and recreating.
- Get a handle on All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and snowmobile use. ATV's are disrupting quietude and wildlife. Register them, tax them, restrict them from designated areas, develop trails for them and keep them on them. Alaska should not be wide open for desecration.
- There is a need for more rest areas, trailhead parking areas, and overview pullouts at scenic historic sites, and for picnic sites with bear/dog proof garbage containers and privies. The “rustic” potty stops adjacent to our present highways are a disgusting disgrace. I realize this costs money and maintenance, but if you build roads “they will come”. The public as well as the DOT needs to realize this.
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths should be included in the budgets and planning for all new highways and the re-surfacing or re-alignment of old ones. These should be a minimum of six feet wide, be a part of the roadbed (except in urban areas or between adjacent centers of population where there should be a separate corridor), and contain a narrow rumble strip to alert both motorists and cyclists they are swerving into each other's right of way.
- We need paths for commuting and recreating.
- Work towards getting tourists out of their cars and tour buses—provide paths and trails at all visitor destinations and rest stops whether urban or rural—encourage them to walk or bike from airports to hotels, etc. Of course many are too old but many will appreciate the option.
- Valdez Parks and Recreation department has recently submitted (for the third year) a proposal to TRAAK for funding of a bike trail that would connect the main subdivisions outside town to the business district. These projects are vital as our communities expand.
- There are no provisions for public restrooms along new or improved highways. In our area (a very heavily used recreation highway) and between Valdez and Anchorage there are no public facilities all during the winter (and only three during the summer). This should be a mandatory inclusion in new highways or those being improved.
- I suggest that the need is to build roads, not do the TRAAK program.
- I am reluctant about DOT/PF getting involved in this TRAAK program. It is too anxious to serve roaded recreation and has a deaf ear about how this will destroy roadless recreation.
- Not enough attention to sidewalks, bike trails, and other alternatives to cars.
- Problems are: overspending; tax ramifications of new roads; unnecessary McCarthy road improvements; lack of waste facilities.
- We need trails and paths off the road.
- Fix the roads that are being used. Don't build new roads in the boonies. Don't build bike paths.
- A good natural (and perhaps cultural) history inventory of highway viewsheds would be helpful for identifying new pullouts.
- We need the monies to be distributed fairly statewide. Road projects should incorporate pedestrian and bicycle lanes. But, mostly the roads we build should be safe and maintained.
- We need year-round rest stops on National Highway System roads and state roads between communities.





- Locate rest stops near some other “attraction” so that they can be maintained.
- Every road system built must have a separated trail to insure safety for all users.
- Use TRAAK and STIP funding and the Governor’s directive in the 1995 Surface Transportation initiative. This must acted upon by ADOT for every road construction and reconstruction project.
- Maintain public use of pullouts during DOT&PF construction.
- Due to our lack of infrastructure at statehood, we get a 90-10 split of revenues. Some of this should be used to build roads and non-vehicular trails around the state.
- We believe there was more intended latitude for the use of enhancement money than has been reflected in the planning process and particularly in the public involvement part of the planning process.
- I recommend DOT establish a bicycle/pedestrian working group to allow public input in creating and implementing strategies.
- Much more needs to be done by the DOT State Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator position to promote and facilitate increased use of non-motorized modes of transportation.
- How will the bicycle/pedestrian plan of 1995 fit into the DOT’s Statewide plan update?
- The issues that seem to be a continuing priority of the department, transit and trails, are rarely if ever spoken about in our dealing with people who have concerns over transportation and the future of Alaska.
- I would like to see more scenic pullouts along the highways. It would be especially nice to have “rest areas” constructed and maintained along our highways.
- One of the highest priorities I have is more bike trails and walking paths constructed along highways, and interconnecting communities. Justification for these trails is safety of bike riders, joggers, and walkers and will provide alternate transportation methods for people who do not have far to travel other than taking an automobile.
- Road projects should incorporate pedestrian and bicycle lanes.
- The Rainbird Trail has been devastated just for survey purposes—so much for trails.
- Emphasize use of trails as transportation systems (recreation use is fine, but need access to jobs, shops, too).
- Establish baseline to measure bike/pedestrian use. Provide incentives for bike/pedestrian use. Develop policy on access to public lands in cooperation with other agencies.
- Need funds to finish trail from Koyuk to Nome.
- Upgrade and repair existing roads—construction of trails and access to recreation facilities, bridge across the Kenai River-Sterling to Funny River.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

- All highway personnel should have to ride the city bus system to work for a winter, and then they would be more sensitive to having to walk on snow berms on top of the sidewalks.
- DOT should go after the root causes of traffic growth rather than keep building new roads to handle the growth (which invariably leads to more traffic growth). Why did

traffic increase on Egan Drive in Juneau 14.5 percent in five years when population growth was only 8.5 percent? That should tell DOT it's not making alternative transportation attractive enough (transit, bike, pedestrian).

- Priorities should be roads and public transportation.
- Waiting for the bus a half hour or an hour in bad weather will not make people use it much on a daily basis.
- The best way to implement suggested improvements is with a statewide fuel tax of at least \$1 per gallon. Ideally the funds raised thereby would be invested in the public debate and physical investments necessary to move us toward greater use of public transit.
- Enhance access to transit stations and stops, and enhance the quality of these stations and stops.
- Most important need is for public transportation.
- No public transportation except in Anchorage?
- I am in favor of public transportation, as there are fewer accidents, less pollution, and less congestion.
- Roads are not the answer to congestion. We are going to have to go in the direction of mass transportation.
- I have concerns about the new paratransit vehicles in Barrow. There's no inside or covered storage, even in winter. The hydraulics freeze up and the lifts don't work either. In addition, gravel gets in the lifts. While low-floor buses might obviate the need for lifts, there are no sidewalks and curbs in Barrow.
- As a world we all need to be more fuel-efficient in everything we do. As a state, we need to do the same. Public transportation is a wonderful way to address the many problems that increased traffic will have on us as Alaska continues to grow.
- What we need is accessible, reliable, and affordable transportation (mass transit/public transportation).
- There is a need in the North Slope Borough for more paratransit vans. The Homemakers organization is getting a van. DOT staff told me that coordinated transportation is rewarded in the project evaluation criteria.
- Training video for rural transit is needed. There are no curbs in Barrow.
- We need more frequent city bus service. I believe that a lot more people would use the buses if they ran on a more timely manner and later hours.
- Buses should hit every bus stop every 20 min, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Bus schedules should be printed in larger letters. Bus schedules could also be printed in Braille.
- I did dare to skim the white Statewide Transportation Plan booklet and discovered that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is not mentioned. Is there no relationship between the FTA and the other systems mentioned in the plan? I would think that the vehicles made possible by the FTA would be an important element of your transportation plan. Just a thought.
- There needs to be some accessible transportation that is not hard to schedule and is available on short notice, also available at all times of the day and night (for example, necessary trips to the hospital that are not serious enough for the ambulance).



MASCOT buses in Palmer

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



- FMATS (Fairbanks metropolitan planning organization) has not put emphasis on transit. Emphasis has been exclusively on roads. There is a need for more emphasis on transit in the Fairbanks area.
- Transit has a favorable impact on the reduction of air pollution.
- Accessibility for handicapped people is important to consider when first building facilities (ramps, size, etc.). It is less expensive to build facilities with this in mind than it is to go back and change it later.
- We should champion mass transportation, including light rail; see European examples. Technology allows a lot of things.
- I support mass transit (that is, buses), especially from Anchorage to Parks Highway/Glenn Highway intersection. Van pool doesn't meet the need. One problem is need to hook up with the transit movement within Anchorage, once there. Suggest running a bus out from Anchorage to Wasilla.
- More roads are NOT the solution; capacity improvements aren't the solution. There is a need for mass transit. There are sixteen-lane roads in Chicago, and Chicago still has traffic problems. A good example of well-planned roadway system without many lanes in Colorado Springs. This was the result of good planning, five years of planning in this case.
- Expand the bus service in Juneau and perhaps in other cities in Alaska.
- Advise them of the best facts and projections available; present the need to phase out private vehicles in favor of public transit: that will get their attention.
- I am also concerned, as we become a place for more and more tourists. We need to address the problem of overcrowded buses when the summer tourist season is happening as many of them travel around Juneau on our buses.
- The issues that seem to be continuing priority at the department, transit and trails, are rarely if ever spoken about in our dealing with people who have concerns over transportation and the future of Alaska.
- Trails and transit are transportation too.
- Maintain current road system with declining revenues and encourage alternate transport—i.e., public transport, bicycles.
- Juneau needs a design for light rail/mass transit.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES

- We need clean, viable public and alternative (to the automobile) transportation with and between our towns and cities, including foot, bike and ski trails (i.e., that lead to business and residential areas).
- Alaska could lead the way in developing alternative transportation networks.
- Ongoing adequate maintenance and travel ability (snow removal, grading, etc.) of existing facilities. Alternate means of alleviating intense traffic congestion (besides more and wider roads).
- Alaska and its transportation system don't have to look like the south 48.
- A light-rail system should be established. This could be run by electricity instead of diesel or gasoline, and would result in less traffic and pollution and less need for road repair and repaving. It would be a wonderful tourist attraction as well.

- How can DOT&PF, if it can at all, imagine and understand that there are alternatives to automobility, and communicate the same to the public?
- How about a monorail to replace the proposed road from Sitka to Baranof Warm Springs?
- Magnetic levitation and other cutting-edge transportation technologies as applied to the bush are needed.
- Transportation needs for Alaska should be met with a strong emphasis on self-sufficiency, efficiency and emphasis upon projects that reduce dependence upon the automobile.
- We need commuter travel on the Glenn Highway between Anchorage and Mat-Su. Give DOT credit for the rideshare program. I have a question about if and when speed limits are going to be raised. Does the legislature make the decision? Everyone drives 75 mph on the Glenn Highway now. Reference was made to higher speed limits in Montana and Arizona. There is interest in raising speed limits here.





contact HOW TO CONTACT US

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Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

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S.O.B. & THINGS
404 Lake Street, #1E . Box 186
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-3844

ANSWERING
MACHINE

Mon April 22, 2002

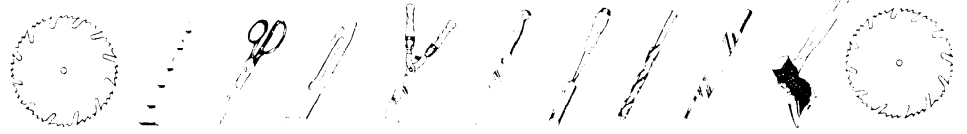
Alaska D.O.T. & P.F.
Planning Division
Juneau, Alaska

Sirs,

I received this this morning!

I don't know what projects
should be deleted, with the
exception of those "fast
ferries"! I believe they'll

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SHOP

S.O.B. & THINGS
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Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-3844

ANSWERING
MACHINE

Cost this state more —
than they'll ever be worth!
I've been on the water
here in South East Alaska all
of my life! I know!
Why don't you tourists
go back you came from?
I know Knudsen administra-
tion is coming up for re-
election. Probably got all

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MOBILE
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S.O.B. & THINGS
404 Lake Street, #1E . Box 186
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-3844

ANSWERING
MACHINE

Kinds of "Work on the
Streets" by this Novem-
ber? Make his self look
good in some people's
eyes! Some people!
Not mine, tho!

Jim Cushing

COMPLETE SHARPENING SERVICE



MOBILE
SHOP

S.O.B. & THINGS
404 Lake Street, #1E . Box 186
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-3844

ANSWERING
MACHINE

P.S.

It seems to me that
by the time you guys
finish studying all of this
~~we're~~ we'll run out of oil
and be right back to being
a ward of the Federal Govt
again?

Subject: Vision 2020

Resent-From: planning-comments@dot.state.ak.us

Date: Fri, 10 May 2002 10:19:37 -0800

From: "Norb Chowaniec" <norb@alaska.net>

To: <planning_comments@dot.state.ak.us>

Transportation Policy Plan

Vision 2000

My suggestion comes to DOT as an *essential paradigm* to improve driving conditions for the traveling public. The issue requiring consideration is slow-moving traffic versus normal-moving traffic on the primary highways during the summer months. The primary highways being referenced as examples are the Parks Highway from Wasilla to Fairbanks and the Glenn Highway passed Palmer.

Plan 1:

Create one mile-long 4-lanes wide segments every twenty miles with the intent of allowing normal-moving vehicles to pass slow-moving vehicles without crossing the centerline.

Normal-moving vehicles would transit the passing segments in 55.4 seconds [0.92 minutes]. Slow-moving vehicles would transit the passing segment in [assuming 50 mph] 72 seconds.. allowing 17 seconds for normal-moving vehicles to pass slow-moving vehicles.

Slow-moving vehicles would transit the 19 miles between passing segments in [assuming 50 mph] 22.8 minutes --- do you see where I'm going with this? Maybe the passing segments need to be longer than a mile.

Plan 2:

Create passing segments every 10 miles. Passing segments every 10 miles would reduce the following time down to 10.8 minutes.

In conclusion, plan 1 & 2 would make approx. thirty miles of 4-lane highway in the 300 miles between Wasilla & Fairbanks. I don't know if this idea is original or not, the important aspect is relieving the stress of following slow-moving vehicles on the open road. Maybe there should be a plan 3 --- passing segments every five miles(?).

Background:

Last year, I had a 18-wheeler pass into me on a short straightaway because the driver got tired of following slow-moving vehicles. After I rounded the upcoming corner, I saw a straightaway 3-times as long -- thinking this 18-wheeler didn't have enough time to pass on this long straight-away out in the middle of nowhere.

One notable comment, slow-moving vehicles use to pull over onto the wide paved shoulders to allow normal-moving vehicles to pass. Not anymore -- why -- the rumble strips on the side of the road. To 'save' the occasional nitwit from driving off the road because they fell asleep has created a huge amount of stress for the majority of the traveling public -- DOT violated the law of unintended consequences and also catered to the extreme few over the majority.

The real sadness on the rumble strips is they are not used where it would be most usefully – on the centerline between opposing lanes on the primary highways – not in cities or towns. The centerline “rumble strips” would be configured with the same length & width as the present painted dashes and no-pass lines. The safety aspect of centerline “rumble strips” would occur during rainy weather, after snowplowing, & night driving. This design would offer more benefit to the majority of the traveling public than rumble strips on the side of the road saving the extreme few from themselves. Think about it, repainting would be cut back by a factor 5 [I made that up but intuitively, I’ll bet repainting would be cut way back].

Don't wait until 2020 -- start now.

Thank you for reading my suggestion / comments,

Norbert Chowanec, Jr

PO Box 82190

Fairbanks, AK 99708-2190

h: 907-455-7741



CITY OF MC GRATH

P. O. BOX 30 McGRATH, ALASKA 99627
PHONE (907) 5244625
FAX (907) 524-3536

FAX

TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

DATE: 6-14-02 TIME: 2:50 pm
TO: John Tolley FAX #: 907-269-0521
Central Region
FROM: Cheryl Dixon FAX#: _____

NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW THIS COVER LETTER 4

DOCUMENTS BEING SENT: Comments due June 14

If you experience any difficulty in receiving this transmittal,
please call our office in McGrath at (907) 524-3825.

RICOH FAX20E

FAX # (907) 524-3536



CITY OF MC GRATH

P. O. BOX 30 McGRATH, ALASKA 99627
PHONE (907) 5244825
FAX (907) 524-3536

June 14, 2002

Marti Dilley, Statewide Plan Manager
Division of Statewide Planning
Alaska Department of Transportation
and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801-9975

Dear Marti Dilley:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Vision 20/20, the State of Alaska's Long Range Transportation Policy Plan.

I have been the City Administrator of the Interior Village of McGrath since mid-April, though my career spans 30 years in public and private transportation, 10 of those years in public service as a City Department Head in Iowa, and as a Division Chief for the USDOT Federal Transit Administration in Oklahoma. I have been linked with the Department of Transportation in some way, shape, or form my entire life, and have participated in the development of many Transportation Improvement Plans.

Since recently moving to Alaska, I found it fitting that the FAA drives most of the DOT since Alaska has so few roads, and since most bush communities are accessible only by air. Yet, I also find it curious that the majority of all the surface transportation dollars are spent in Anchorage, with some leftover for a handful of other cities.

In my brief time in McGrath, I have discovered its richest resource—McGrath's people. Citizens know each other, help each other, collaborate and cooperate with each other on projects. I have witnessed first hand their drive and initiative to do *what it takes* to get the job done. McGrath demonstrates community strength and stamina, has talent and labor skills, and a rare sense of vision and wisdom. We are finalizing our Strategic Plan, our Community Economic Development Strategy. We have energy and leadership resources. The McGrath I read about in Vision 20/20 is not the McGrath I am living. I wonder how many other villages and small towns feel this same way.

I would ask the State to consider a long range transportation policy that effectively enhances the safety, quality of life, and infrastructure to support economic development opportunities throughout all of Alaska, not just in a high density corridor. There are Alaskan people and products that need intra-regional, inter-regional and intra-state transport. How does one "Buy Alaska" if we can't economically trade with each other? We are spending DOT resources on a tourist and product Port of entry and exit in Anchorage, at the expense of or neglecting the untapped resources of the remainder of the State.

Sincerely,


Cheryl Ann Ogren

CC: John Tolley, Central Region
Mayor Paula Harris, City of McGrath

Comments on DOT 2020 Plan
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Plan

Comments:

- Priorities: improve safety, enhance quality of life, infrastructure to support economic development opportunities. Excellent foundation on which to base transportation planning.
- McGrath appears to be not included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Airport Improvement Program (AIP). This means McGrath projects will be incorporated "as funding becomes available", and has no imminent prioritization. This is not beneficial, nor acceptable, to McGrath. Local resources and economic development are dependent upon development of the Ruby-McGrath road and maintaining McGrath's sub-regional hub airport facilities.
- Culturally, McGrath is not homogenous with the Yukon or Bethel region. The interior region surround McGrath seems to be considered part of the Bethel region just because it is on the Kuskokwim River. 1) Bethel and Y-K Delta is 85% Yupik. McGrath is Athabascan. McGrath Native culture is common to Fairbanks (Tanana Chiefs Council, Doyon Corp) and Anchorage. As well, transportation, communication, and logistics ties are with Anchorage and Fairbanks. Economic development and Native corporations are tied to Anchorage and Fairbanks. McGrath supplies come out of Anchorage. Some barge traffic arrives up the Kuskokwim River from Bethel, but barge traffic transportation costs would be greatly reduced if delivered up the Yukon River to Ruby, and trucked overland into McGrath. Bethel is not McGrath's hub community, though the *Summary* states Bethel is the region's hub community. Bethel is the economic, commercial, transportation, and social center of the area south and west of Aniak. As stated in the *Summary*, Bethel serves 10 villages within 30 miles of Bethel and 15 villages along the Bering Sea coast. Bethel does not serve the Interior Kuskokwim area up to and beyond McGrath to the North and East. McGrath is closer to Anchorage (air time: 1 hr) than to Bethel. McGrath residents travel to Anchorage to the Alaska Native Medical Center for hospital and medical attention, not Bethel. McGrath and it's surrounding sub-region should be considered on its own merit with its own separate issues.
- Since transportation to the Interior (McGrath) and Bethel originates in Anchorage, it would appear to make more sense that McGrath serve the lower river villages along the Kuskokwim (Lime Village, Stony River, Sleetmute, Red Devil, Crooked Creek, Flat) as well as Ophir, Takotna, Nikolai, Telida. And Aniak serve Kalskag, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Chuathbaluk, Marshall, Anvik, Grayling, Shageluk so as not to backtrack. What is the justification for this? (Refer to *Summary*, page 7 Figure 12, USPS Hub-and-Spoke System for the YK Delta).
- McGrath already has upgraded its airport facilities which are in place and ready for greater utilization. McGrath does not require immediate improvements and upgrades as other villages do. McGrath's community includes: an FAA station, a US Weather Bureau station, an AK Fish and Game/ State Trooper's office, and DNR/Div of Forestry firefighter camp, US Fish and Wildlife/Innoko Wildlife Refuge, a small sub-regional health clinic with resources in place to build in 2003 a large regional health clinic complete with an on-site doctor. All this is served by a recently

Comments on DOT 2020 Plan
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Plan

improved 5200 ft runway with a new air cargo terminal (9 months old). Hercules C-130's can land here. McGrath has one of the longest airport runways in the entire Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and it should not be underutilized. McGrath is the headquarters of the Iditarod Area School District, and often we have groups that often fly to Anchorage on a 30-passenger aircraft.

- The information regarding passenger traffic warrants challenging. Recent statistics from Pen Air covering the last 12 months indicate 19-passenger plans, and sometimes 30-passenger planes are in service with load factors ranging from 45% to 78%, not 9-passenger planes as stated in *Vision 2020*. Even considering a low average load factor of 61%, that still means there are between 10 and 18 people on those planes, not 9 or less.
- McGrath air cargo tonnage: Warrants an updated review as well. Was unable to obtain statistics before the June 14 deadline.
- Page 9. *Airport development is the most important issue for a region lacking highways.* The reverse is also a critical issue: **A region is dependent upon airports because it has no roads or highways.** If we can build the Alaska-Canada highway in 8 months; if we can build and expand roads in the Anchorage-Mat Su bowl and up to Denali National Park; if we can build beltway highways with low traffic counts in Fairbanks; if we can invest in a major railroad facility and track for a handful of tourists or commuters at very narrow and specific times; if we can invest in airport expansion which implies a very expensive form of cargo and personal transportation; then we must have the resources and know-how to piece together small, closely related regions by building a few roads. Nationwide, roads are a national security issue. Roads are considered infrastructure required for economic development, farm-to-market, and free trade. Ignoring roads in Alaska is ignoring our own economic and market development. To become more self-reliant, we need to create jobs throughout [rural] Alaska, and to move our products and services to our fellow Alaskans. This can't be achieved through prohibitive air transportation costs. McGrath only needs a few miles of roads to connect it with Ruby and the Yukon river, which would eventually connect itself over the surface with Fairbanks. A road to McGrath is critical to mineral and timber resource manufacturing. Year-round residents create labor pools and sustainable economies, and support the infrastructure. Why invest so much money in communities under 100 or 200 residents when investment in expanding the services and infrastructure of sub-and more important response time more immediate, if served from a sub-regional hub like McGrath, rather than a community on the coast (Bethel, Anchorage, etc.)
- Please note on page 15 that McGrath is listed a US Postal Service Hub. It is also a Fire/Resource center for the DNR/Div of Forestry, and flies fuel. This is not noted.
- Page 18 - McGrath and the villages surrounding it have long-standing winter trails, including the Iditarod trail. It appears in *Vision 20/20* that there is no development of winter trails planned in and around McGrath.
- Page 20 - Village concerns listed here do not apply to McGrath. McGrath already has a consolidated hub village clinic, school district, etc. McGrath has investment and development concerns relating to a need for wider access to local subsistence

Comments on DOT 2020 Plan
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Plan

resources as an economic resource for hunters and fisherman. McGrath residents already have cars and trucks to transport people and goods between villages, and the businesses have resources to expand truck fleets to get their goods and products to market, while backhauling food, fuel and supplies. Page 21 states the rolling hills Interior portion **does** have suitable terrain and soils for standard road construction, and Vision 20/20 supports the Ruby-McGrath road. Local villages have initiated public/private partnerships for road construction and maintenance. Fairbanks and McGrath would then have access to each other's market economies, and, as stated in Vision 20/20 that would "help diversify and expand the Fairbanks-area economy". However, the Ruby-McGrath road is planned in 6 stages, and is not even in the funding stream. It is recommended that the road be constructed from both ends at the same time. Then the 6th-ranking and yet most critical project element, connection of the sub-regional hub McGrath, will be ensured its road link.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES DIVISION OF STATEWIDE PLANNING

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

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JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-7898
PHONE: (907) 465-4070
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FAX: (907) 465-6984

August 5, 2002

Cheryl Ann Ogren, Administrator
City of McGrath
P.O. Box 30
McGrath, Alaska 99627

Dear Ms. Ogren:

Thank you for your comments on the draft Vision: 2020 Statewide Transportation Plan. It appears that many of your specific comments were in response not to the draft *Vision: 2020* but to the Yukon-Kuskokwim Plan. As a result, I have provided a copy of your comments to senior planner Mike McKinnon who will contact you on those issues.

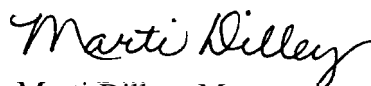
The draft *Vision: 2020* plan in three sections is posted on our website:
www.alaska.gov/vision2020.

We have recorded your comments pertinent to the draft policies as indicated below:

- “Airport development is the most important issue for a region lacking highways. A region is dependent upon airports because it has no roads or highways” and following discussion. (Policy 1 -System Character).
- “Improve safety, enhance quality of life and infrastructure to support economic development opportunities throughout all of Alaska.” (Policy 4 - Economic Development).
- “We are spending DOT resources on a tourist and product Port of entry and exit in Anchorage, at the expense of or neglecting the untapped resources of the remainder of the state” and “The majority of all the surface transportation dollars are spent in Anchorage, with some leftover for a handful of other cities.” (Policy 14 – Transportation Investment Decisions).

We appreciate your thoughtful review and assure you that we will carefully consider these views in formulating the plan’s final departmental policies.

Sincerely,



Marti Dilley, Manager
Statewide Transportation Plan

Subject: Vision2020 comments

Resent-From: planning_comments@dot.state.ak.us

Date: Fri, 14 Jun 2002 08:57:50 -0800

From: "Bush, Jay" <Jay_Bush@health.state.ak.us>

To: "'planning_comments@dot.state.ak.us'" <planning_comments@dot.state.ak.us>

CC: "Ryan, Millie" <Millie_Ryan@health.state.ak.us>

Vision:2020 Update
Statewide Transportation Policy Plan

General comments:

Let me begin by congratulating the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities on taking the time and effort to put together a plan with both a broad and long range vision and allowing for a great deal of public comment.

That being said, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Educations would like to see an emphasis placed on the coordination of existing community based transportation systems to increase the mobility of individual with their own community. In some cases DOT/PF may have to assist in the development of a mechanism to facilitate this coordination.

The Council also recommends a review of the mobility and transportation needs of Alaskans and their communities, statewide. The ability to plan well for the future depends heavily on knowledge of the here and now. Without that review, resources could be spent for projects, programs, facilities which do not utilize existing infrastructure, or that fail to meet the real need. As we face the decrease of state revenues and an increase in need, we all must work together to make the best use of what exists now while using resources to better develop systems that meet the needs of all Alaskans.

An ongoing need recognized by the Council is funding for operations. It appears that there are many ways for individuals/agencies/communities to access money to buy roads, equipment, and facilities. But the means to operate and maintain those items is often limited. The Council recommends, beyond shifting the responsibility for operations onto local communities, that DOT/PF have a policy of working in conjunction with the federal government to develop funding streams to assist agencies and communities with operations and maintenance of existing programs and equipment.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything the Governor's Council can do to assist the Department at any time please call myself, Jay C. Bush, Planner II at 269-8991, or Millie Ryan, Executive Director at 269-8990.

Thank you very much!

Jay C. Bush



Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 5957, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

(907) 225-3184 • FAX: (907) 2253187

www.ketchikanchamber.com • Email: kchamber@kpunet.net

June 17, 2002

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Tom Brigham, Statewide Planning Division Director

VISION: 2020

Division of Statewide Planning

3132 Channel Drive, Room 200

Juneau, AK 99801-7898

RE: Comments on VISION: 2020

Dear Mr. Tom Brigham:

The Transportation Committee of the Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce submits the following comments for this biennial review process for the ADOT&PF's VISION: 2020

In January of 2002, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough expanded its transit system from two to four buses. The Transit System now serves the expanded boundaries of the City of Ketchikan, as well as areas outside the City boundary between the City of Ketchikan (south) and the City of Saxman.

The Saxman Seaport is now being served by the transit system. This service enables transportation for riders to and from the airport to marine terminals in Ketchikan (AMHS and IFA) and in Saxman (AMHS Walden Point Ferry) as well as access to major activity centers within the community.

Sincerely,

K.A. Swiger

Co-Chairperson Transportation Committee

Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce



ALASKA MINERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Anchorage, Alaska 99503 • (907) 563-9229 • FAX (907) 563- 9225 www.alaskaminers.org

June 27, 2002

Ms. Marti Dilley
Statewide Plan Manager
Division of Statewide Planning
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
3 132 Channel Drive, Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801-9975

Re: Vision 2020

Dear Ms. Dilley,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Vision 2020. The Alaska Miners Association is a non-profit membership organization representing all aspects of the mining industry in Alaska. Roads and other transportation infrastructure are essential to the mining industry. With that said, we would like to offer our observations on Vision 2020.

It is clear that a lot of work has gone into this document. Many admirable goals and objectives are listed throughout the Statewide Transportation Plan. However, we feel that there is not sufficient substance behind the promises. Considering the magnitude of each individual policy, it seems as though the plan is too idealistic. There are many promises, but no commitment to actually build new roads or other infrastructure. What are the 10 top priority new roads in Alaska? What is the plan to get these funded? What is the time frame to have them completed?

Vision 2020 implies throughout that the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities believes that investing in various modes of transportation would be advantageous but priorities are not given. And because references to priorities appear throughout, we question the priority given to construction of TRAAK projects. Recreational activities and facilities are important to the quality of life but economy should be the primary priority. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities should focus on each community's road and access needs before proceeding with leisure-related endeavors.

We do not agree that more roads would result in more congestion, debt and pollution. The problem of congestion is driven by the fact that there are so few side roads off the main highways that can disperse the traffic. This is especially clear during the summer tourist season. Hundreds, if not thousands, of motor homes are now crammed onto the few major highways with no where else to go.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the updated Vision 2020 and encourage development of concrete plans and priorities.

Sincerely,

Steven C. Borell, P.E.
Executive Director



ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS of ALASKA

8005 SCHOON STREET • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99518
TELEPHONE (907) 561-5354 • FAX (907) 562-6118

July 8, 2002

Marti Dilley
Statewide Plan Manager
Division of Statewide Planning
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Suite 200
Juneau Alaska 99801-9975

Re: Vision 2020

Dear Ms. Dilley:

In his welcoming statements regarding the Vision 2020 Update, Joseph Perkins remarked,

"The primary purpose of this plan, when finalized, is to set the direction for Alaska's 21st century transportation system in line with our departments commitment to you as embodied in our mission statement:

The mission of the department is to improve the quality of life for Alaskans by cost-effectively providing, operating and maintaining safe, environmentally sound and reliable transportation systems and public facilities. Special emphasis will be given to utilizing meaningful public involvement and creating working partnership with other entities."

However, to properly evaluate the Vision 2020 Statement for the Department of Transportation, it must be viewed as a subset of a vision plan for the State of Alaska. The transportation infrastructure of Alaska exists to address the needs of the citizens of the state. Transportation is not an end in itself; it is merely a means to a greater end. Throughout history, ships, trains, cars, and airplanes all provided economic mini-booms as access to new markets and cultures helped provide the basic elements for growth. Hence the Vision plan for the Department of Transportation must be prepared to compliment and support the Vision plan for Alaska.

Since transportation can enable and enhance growth, but by itself cannot create growth, the Vision statement must contemplate certain fundamental questions:

1. How does the State devise a transportation plan that considers the needs and constraints of different regions of Alaska in a fair and equitable manner?
2. How does the Vision for the future deviate from the realities of today and what steps need to be taken to move from where we are to where we want to be?
3. How should the various elements of Alaska's transportation system be combined to provide the most effective and efficient transportation system?
4. What level of transportation services should Alaskans expect? If there is a difference between the current level of services and the expected level of services, how do we bridge the gap?
5. What is the role of transportation in the development of Alaska's natural resources?
6. What are the limitations to the development of those natural resources?
7. How does the State intend to address the issue of traffic congestion?
8. How does the vision plan for Alaska relate to the vision plan of the US Department of Transportation?

To address these questions, it is important to make assumptions regarding the future. Between 1980 and 2000 the population of Alaska grew by 56%. What is the projected population of Alaska in 2020 and where will the residents live? How will the increased population impact the current transportation systems?

In viewing the future it is important to understand the past and why we have what we have today. Nationwide for example, from 1980 to 2000,
vehicle miles of travel increased by 77%
number of drivers increased by 30%
truck vehicle miles of travel increased 120%
lane miles increased 6 % and
population increased 20%.

At the same time, 84 percent of the nation's \$7 trillion in freight traffic travels on highways, with truck travel expected to grow by more than three percent annually over the next 20 years. In addition, the number of drivers is increasing slightly faster than the overall population, and each driver on average is traveling more miles each year. At present 91 percent of all person-miles traveled in the United States occurs in private vehicles on

highways. Although passenger travel growth is expected to slow, it nonetheless will grow more than 40 percent over the next two decades.

An examination of these statistics can only conclude that congestion will increase and with it the attendant costs to society. A recent Texas Transportation Institute study estimates the total cost of congestion in just 68 urban areas has grown from \$21 billion in 1982 to \$78 billion in 1999.

The costs of congestion in Alaska are not on the magnitude of many other urban areas yet, but is increasing and already represents a significant problem in Anchorage. Normal suggestions to relieve congestion in Alaska may not offer the promised gain that might be expected in other urban areas. The latest census shows that 66.5 percent of Alaska workers commute alone. That number is already lower than all but two other states. 15.5 percent of the workers reported that they car-pooled, while only 1.8 percent used public transportation. This number pales when compared to the 7.3 percent that walk to work.

Reviewing the questions raised above in light of the population trends expected for Alaska and the nation, plus seeking guidance and direction from the Vision Statement, it is readily apparent that the statement took a different approach. Vision 2020 did not look at a vision for the entire state and prescribe a transportation system to support that vision. Instead Vision 2020 apparently chose to modify and “tweak” our current transportation system. It does not describe a process for improving or modifying Alaska’s basic transportation infrastructure. It does not contemplate when and how our transportation infrastructure should be expanded or contracted. It does not address the fundamental questions raised above.

Perhaps the approach utilized is appropriate if the transportation system of Alaska is viewed in isolation. When viewed as a means to an end however, it is very limiting. When the current system is viewed as the desired system, process issues are substituted for policy issues and the entire focus becomes narrow and introspective.

In summary, Vision 2020 fails to examine the broad transportation issues that are apparent today and will become increasingly more important and critical as the State approaches 2020. Therefore it would seem that the best alternative would be to reexamine the approach taken and expand the study to look at the fundamental questions raised above. Vision statements are difficult because they are based on an assessment of the future. To properly identify and consider all the countervailing elements and factors that will impact that vision is difficult, but essential.

Perhaps it is not Vision 2020 that is lacking but the mission statement of the Department. The current mission statement provides no direction or view of

the future. The mission statement is concerned with providing, operating and maintaining transportation systems but apparently does not contemplate growth and the enhancements to the transportation system necessary to accommodate that growth. Therefore it would seem a proper Vision statement should start with a vision for Alaska in 2020 and then a revised mission statement that supports that vision. A revised Vision 2020 for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities that follows the development of a vision statement for the state could then consider the fundament questions enumerated above and provide a true vision for the transportation needs of Alaska in the year 2020.

Sincerely,

--

**Richard Cattanach
Executive Director**

July 31, 2002

Marti Dilley
Transportation Planner
Alaska Department of Transportation
3232 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Ms. Dilley,

Thank you for considering these comments from the Alaska Citizens Transportation Coalition regarding Alaska's Vision 2020 Update, Statewide Transportation Plan.

In general, we find the draft plan to be very progressive, including goals for energy efficiency, intermodalism, and livability. Public Involvement policies are comprehensive. The "Recommendations from the Planning Factor Analyses" provide strong direction for improving the state's planning practices and transportation projects, and can make transportation investments become more responsive to Alaska's future social, environmental and economic conditions.

The following comments offer other language and areas for staff to consider when developing the final draft of Vision 2020. We offer them with our thanks for such a positive beginning, and our hope that Vision 2020 will be publicly reviewed and evaluated every so often in the years to come.

This sentiment can be incorporated into the document's introduction, ie: This document is part of an ongoing process of communications between the department and the public it serves. The department will periodically review and evaluate its policies and progress towards achieving them.

Policy 3 System Character

New bullet: Develop transportation design standards that are appropriate for Alaska's northern environment and character.

Policy 4 Economic. Development

Delete: "Institute environmental streamlining by providing" Substitute: *Provide. . .*

Policy 5 Economic Development

Consider changing the “or” to an “and” so that new roads connecting communities will be provided only when compelling public need is shown and when “economically, socially *and* environmentally justified.

Policy 6 Public Involvement

New bullet: Inform the public about the most effective way to respond to a call for involvement and the potential for their comments to affect the project.

New bullet: Work with local governments to develop a planning process that demonstrates the relationships among land use and transportation investments.

Policy 9 Livability

New bullet: Inventory and protect both natural and manmade visual resources of proposed transportation investments.

Policy 10 Livability

Consider adding age to the list of conditions for receiving transportation benefits.

New bullet: Evaluate transportation improvements for disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, or activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

Policy 11 Livability

Consider adding to the last bullet: When making transportation improvements in communities, incorporate *context sensitive* designs that promote community livability.

Policy 16 Funding

New bullet: Support changes in federal law to increase flexibility so that capital resources can be allocated to operating and maintaining transportation systems.

New bullet: Ensure existing transportation systems will be adequately operated and maintained before adding new capacity.

New bullet: Base transportation maintenance priorities within a community on locally expressed priorities.

Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Signed

Kay Brown

Dave Lacey

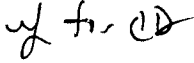
Frankie Pillifant

Cheryl Richardson

Alaska Citizens Transportation Coalition

MEMORANDUM

TO: Marti Dilley
Manager, Statewide Transportation Policy Plan
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

FROM: Chip Dennerlein 
Director
Division of Habitat and Restoration

DATE: August 1, 2002

SUBJECT: Comments on Draft *Vision: 2020 Update*

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has reviewed the Policies Section (section 1) of the spring 2002 Draft of the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan entitled *Vision: 2020 Update*. In general, the *Vision: 2020 Update* is a comprehensive listing of numerous policies and policy objectives that are quite broad in scope. ADF&G is providing you with the following comments to assist in development of the plan.

ADF&G recommends that this plan include a policy on fish passage. Over the past ten years, fish passage has become an increasingly important issue to ADF&G as well as the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF). ADF&G and ADOT&PF have worked cooperatively to develop assessment protocols and standards to maintain fish passage. The Commissioners of ADF&G and ADOT&PF drafted a "Safe Passage" policy for fish, and submitted it to Governor Knowles (see attachment). This policy states that the future transportation infrastructure should be developed to ensure that fish passage is restored when repairing existing drainage structures that presently obstruct fish passage. ADF&G recommends that the plan include a fish passage policy and suggests the following wording for this proposed policy:

Develop and implement standards and protocols that will maintain free and efficient fish passage through drainage structures and ensure that fish passage is maintained in our existing and future transportation system infrastructure.

ADF&G believes that the proposed fish passage policy should be stated in the "Systems Character" section of this document. Objectives for this policy should include:

- Accommodate free and efficient fish passage in the design of all new drainage structures.

- Repair or replace drainage structures that have been identified as impediments to fish passage.
- Implement a regular drainage structure-monitoring program to include all state roads.
- Conduct regular maintenance of drainage structures to ensure that fish blockages do not develop.

In addition to the proposed fish passage policy, ADF&G suggests that the objectives stated in Policy 9 include some mention of mitigating moose-vehicle collisions. The 1996 report "Moose-Vehicle Accidents on Alaska's Rural Highways," written by ADOT&PF, identified several highway segments that have high concentrations of moose-vehicle collisions. This report noted that Alaska has the highest rate of moose-vehicle collisions in the world. Moose-vehicle collisions are a public safety issue as well as a resource issue. ADF&G recommends that the following objectives of Policy 9 be stated:

- Continue to develop alternatives to minimize moose-vehicle collisions.
- Implement measures to minimize moose-vehicle collisions.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this planning document and request that ADF&G be given an opportunity to comment on any subsequent drafts of the *Vision: 2020 Update*. Please contact Lance Trasky if you have any specific questions on the comments provided.

Attachment

cc: L. Trasky
A. Ott
B. Hanson
W. Ballard, ADOT&PF

12/21/01

DRAFT**GOVERNOR'S POLICY****A Policy for Implementing "Safe Passage" of Anadromous and Resident Fish While
Maintaining and Improving State Transportation Infrastructure**

Alaska is fortunate that we are one of the few areas in the world where fish species and habitats are generally intact. Our fisheries resources improve the life of every Alaskan. Industries based on fish harvests are the largest employer in the state and provide revenues second only to the sale of the state's oil and gas. Subsistence and personal use fisheries are a main source of food for many Alaskans. Our "world class" sport fishery is a major contributor to our economy and our quality of life.

Unlike many of the major salmon producing rivers in the Pacific Northwest, we do not have hydroelectric dams that effect the migration in the major salmon producing rivers in the Pacific Northwest. Yet, like the Pacific Northwest there are too many culverts along our highway system that are barriers to fish migration.

Anadromous and resident fish populations depend on safe reliable passage through highway culverts when migrating to spawning, rearing and over-wintering grounds. Barriers to safe fish passage caused by dams, culverts, tide gates, dikes, and other in-stream structures is one of the more significant factors in the decline of salmon and trout throughout the Pacific Northwest. Many salmon and trout populations in Washington, Idaho and Oregon have declined to levels where they have been listed as "threatened" under the Threatened and Endangered Species Act. The adverse effect of this listing on their economy is just now being fully realized.

In Alaska, culverts used to cross-rivers and streams have also adversely affected safe fish passage in many watersheds. Perched culverts and velocity barriers resulting from past design, construction or maintenance practices account for most of the fish passage problems.

Therefore, in keeping with my "Safe Passage" promise to British Columbia, Washington and Oregon for the Pacific Salmon Treaty, my administration is committed to safe fish passage in all Alaskan waters. I have informed the commissioners' of ADOT&PF and ADF&G ("the agencies") that it is the policy of the State of Alaska that actions undertaken by their agencies that affect safe fish passage will assure the following:

1. When funding or authorizing Capital Improvement Projects and Maintenance Activities, the agencies will assure "safe fish passage" to spawning, rearing and over wintering habitat is maintained.
-

2. The agencies will assure that technical resource information regarding "safe fish passage" (e.g. the fish pass model) is made available on the state web site for use by local governments, other state and federal agencies, consultants and other entities.
3. The agencies will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and other interagency agreements affecting Alaska's safe fish passage commitments after a period of five (5) years and report on the finding. The report will recommend corrective actions if current strategies are not providing adequate safe fish passage.
4. The agencies will meet annually to prioritize corrective actions that remove barriers to safe fish passage.

This policy directs the state's fish habitat and transportation experts to continue their cooperative efforts regarding safe fish passage as we develop our transportation infrastructure into the 21st century. At its core is a belief that we can have both quality transportation infrastructure and abundant fisheries resources. Both are vital for Alaska to retain its economic vitality and its wonder and desirability as both a home to cherish and a preeminent destination for visitors.

with local, federal ^{+ private} entities ~~regarding~~
 (A) Agencies will explore & pursue other opportunities
 for cooperation with sharing, ~~no~~ research,
 monitoring, etc. in habitat science & transportation
 engineering. ^{to the areas of}
 to further this policy

During the 5 yr. review period,
 (B) The agencies will work cooperatively on an ongoing
 basis to assess the effectiveness of standards, designs, ~~and~~
 construction techniques & mitigation strategies; and will
 use this information to continue to test, refine & apply
 new techniques to improve program success.

Specific Recommended:

(C) These actions will be included, as priority projects, in
 the annual budgets & work programs of the respective
 agencies to ensure that they are accomplished in a
 timely manner.

Marti Dilley, Statewide Plan Manager
Division of Statewide Planning
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801-9975

Dear Statewide Planning Manager:

I received a copy of the Draft Vision 2020 Update of the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan, Although I live in Juneau and do not experience many of the transportation problems concerning the rest of the state, there are areas of our transportation systems that concern me, As an advocate for our bus service, as a bicycle rider, and as a user of the Alaska Marine Highway, I have some ideas for the State of Alaska for improving transportation for those people in all Alaskan cities that use these services.

I realize there are far more people who drive and use cars than those that use mass transportation, but I also see when I ride the bus that the majority of the population in Juneau who take the bus are one or more of the following: low income, those who have had their driver's licenses suspended or terminated, elderly, physically disabled, mentally disabled, people who can't afford or don't own a car, and those that see it as a means of transportation which is cheaper and more environmentally friendly than driving a car.

Unfortunately, in my experiences with problems dealing with Capital Transit in Juneau, I was not able to get many of these type of riders listed above to join me at meetings or write you to voice their opinions. They are definitely the silent majority that ride the buses. Although many people did give me their feedback when I asked, they do not see how important it is to speak out on issues which concern them so that they can be a part in possibly creating a better transportation system. Unfortunately, many of these people also have far greater problems to deal with in their lives than finding the time to comment on a transportation plan. It is my hope that the State of Alaska will begin to allocate more funds toward mass transportation in our cities than it has in the past. By doing so, it will

reduce congestion in downtown areas by offering residents an alternative means of transportation, it **will** lessen our **use** of fossil fuels, and with less traffic the road systems will have less wear and tear.

I would like the State **of** Alaska to give more funding to half-hour bus service in places like Juneau where it has been proven to be a good part of Public Works that lower-income people use. It is very unfair to put so much funding into **our** road systems which are not used by those that do not own a car. By establishing better more frequent half hour service, it **would** improve the lives of many residents. Although it has been said that the bus service does not pay for itself, I have not seen a road in Alaska that pays for itself either, yet we continue to fund **and** improve and well-maintain our roads.

In relation to the financial support for buses, I think that in places like Juneau, Anchorage, and wherever else the State of Alaska provides funding for mass transportation, that the buses need to be equipped with fare boxes that **automatically** let the driver know how much money each passenger puts in the box when they get on the bus. As approximately 5 to 10 percent of the income on the buses is lost to incorrect fares being put in the fare boxes, this would increase the amount of income on all the buses substantially. I **realize** that the boxes that add up(built-in computer) the fares are more **expensive** than the regular fare boxes, however in the long run these boxes would pay for themselves and **also** add on what would have been **lost** income,

If the State of Alaska is honestly going to encourage people to use bicycles, the funding needs to **be** there to keep up the maintenance on present bicycle paths, and futuristically, when building all roads, include bike paths on those roads and provide for the necessary maintenance which includes sweeping and painting the bike paths. We have often times in Juneau when construction **materials**(stones, gravel, etc.), and broken glass are on the bike paths **while** the roads beside them are clean, For the safety of all riders, including children, it is important to keep the bicycle paths **clean** so that bicycles do not swerve onto the road to avoid what is on the bike paths, It is important that the bike paths are painted so that cars are aware of their existence. It is frustrating in Juneau at **time** to ride

a bicycle and be cursed at by a car driver for being there when there is no obvious lines to indicate a bike path. More signs along the roads to indicate bicycle paths would also be helpful to make drivers more aware of others on the road.

Places like Thane and past the ferry terminal out the road in Juneau are dangerous to bike riders as there aren't any bike paths at all. If the funding is not presently there to build bike paths, then I suggest that the State add more caution signs so that drivers are made more aware and also lower the speed limit in those places.

The State could come up with an idea to award drivers who go and come to work with more than one rider. Often in Juneau, we have people driving on the roads to work with only one passenger in the car. In places like Seattle, they offer drivers incentives for them to drive with more than one person. We could do that in cities in Alaska and by doing so, have less wear and tear on the roads as well as lowering our emissions into the air and also create less congestion in the urban parts of our cities.

I encourage the State of Alaska to raise the motor fuel and gas state taxes. By doing so, there would be more funding to pay for our roads and the improvements that I have mentioned above. I also encourage the State of Alaska to think of a light rail as a viable alternative to gas driven vehicles. The amount of oil that we extract from the ground is becoming a greater and greater problem in many ways. By being innovative and coming up with new ideas, like light rail, we would be putting our futuristic focus toward new ideas and not living in the fossil age,

To improve transportation throughout Southeast Alaska, I encourage the State of Alaska to bring on more fast ferries. As our communities in Southeast Alaska continue to grow, we need to be able to connect these places and the fast ferries are the way to do it. It seems as though private enterprise is taking on some of this initiative and the State needs to be more in the forefront of moving this idea forward. For example, as the avalanche paths create a dangerous hazard between Haines and Juneau, daily ferries during the Summer have helped to connect the two places. During off times of the year, these big

ferries tend to **cost** alot of money and time. If we had faster, more efficient ferries, time and energy would **be** saved without **the** expensive **cost** of building a road. As **our** communities continue to grow in Southeast Alaska, the larger **communities** need to reach out more to the smaller ones. Faster ferries are a good means of doing so.

To sum up, as we continue to grow as a State, transportation will also grow. We **need** to be innovative in our ideas for growth of transportation fur our future. Fossil fuels are becoming harder to find, and the quantity of fossil fuels in **our** earth is dwindling. We need to start using ideas that take us away from our dependence on fossil fuels and teach us to be more conscious of their effects to our **world's** environment. VISION 2020 is a great way to start to be more efficient in our **use** of our **resources**. I urge you to put more emphasis in your planning on improved bus transportation, **improved** bicycle paths, **and** look forward to a future with light rail and faster ferries. By Urging drivers to double-up when going to work, **and** having better, **more** convenient mass transit systems as an alternative to driving available to the public, we **can** reduce our addiction to individuals driving to and from work by themselves. It is easy to see how less traffic **would** mean less repairs for our roads. At a time **when** the State is cutting the funding to those that maintain our roads with the Department of Transportation, these ideas seem very timely. By increasing the tax on fuels, it would certainly help pay for the cost of making these improvements. If we are truly **going** to took forward to better transportation systems for all of us, we need to step outside of the way that we have been doing things and move on to new ideas, I look **forward** to the State of Alaska becoming more user friendly to those that don't drive when it comes to the word transportation. Thank you for this comment period and I hope some of these ideas will soon be implemented.

Sincerely yours,


Joyce Levine

P.O. Box 21705

Juneau, Alaska 99802

June 9, 2002

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

DIVISION OF STATEWIDE PLANNING

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

3132 CHANNEL DRIVE
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-7898
PHONE: (907) 465-4070
TEXT: (907) 465-3652
FAX: (907) 465-6984

August 6, 2002

Joyce Levine
P.O. Box 21705
Juneau, AK 99802

Dear Ms. Levine:

Thank you for your thoughtful comments on the draft Vision: 2020 Plan. I note your support for public transit, bicycle paths with adequate maintenance, fast ferries, light rail, a fuel tax increase to support transportation infrastructure improvements, and alternatives to the single occupancy car and fossil fuels.

We are currently compiling all public comments received and evaluating them for revisions to the policies and objectives. Your comments will be included in our evaluation of Policy 1 on System Character, Policy 13 on Transportation Enhancements and Policy 16 on Funding and Maintenance. We will be evaluating the need for additional policies as well.

Sincerely,



Marti Dilley, Manager
Statewide Transportation Plan

TO

DOT & PF Commissioner
AND
DOT & PF Perkins

DANA L. OLSON
HC-30 Box 5438
Wasilla, AK 99654

DNR
MSB / AND MSB Coastal district (15 pages)

2020
Re Vision Update AND STIP Comment
Requests made Pursuant to this Public Process.

1. In Addressing the history of this process I'd like to mention that an adequate means^{IN} already existed for public participation^{IN} 1996. to address policies and routes for transportation under title 38; AND AK Coastal mgmt program receiving Federal funding. It is my belief A new PIP^{Procedure} was establish in order to create AND over-ride existing planning Criteria AND ultimately change LAND-USE; IN VIOLATION OF CLEAN AIR Act.

2. Other State Agencies Such As DNR Are holding that they must revise title 38, LAND-USE Plans, utilizing that public process, which they believe ~~is~~ is PARAMOUNT to any decision they make. I'm AM held hostage in that scenario for conyenance of my 1984 Chase Agricultural Hmstds. The plaintiffs in AK Survival VS DNR (1986) take transportation issues, to the highest

regard. They see transportation access as the demon attacking their perceived lifestyle. I humor at your policy #5 under ~~System~~^{economic development} ~~theater~~. This policy is why I am aggrieved under economic development. In fact this policy conflicts with all the policies address economic development, the main premise of policies in Vision 2020 update. You give no rational basis for this policy, and I object highly to its vagueness as stated here. If transportation is to be used to foster economic prosperity, a policy like #4 economic ~~structure~~^{development} destroys the premise that promotes taking property for such activities for other economic development and ~~prosper~~ prosperity. I reiterate I'm not going to take this policy, without a means for a hearing for my due process before Federal approval. Please explain how you intend to work with DNR on this. I expect a position paper addressing this and my status

OF PARCELS ADL 10023 AND 10026.
I ALSO REITERATE IN (91 2/90) FEDERAL
DOT & PF WAS MADE AWARE OF OUR
NEED TO ADDRESS TRANSPORTATION ISSUES
BEFORE ADOPTING POLICIES TO ~~HINDER~~
HINDER OR IMPAIR MY CONVEYANCE AND
OF MY ^{AGRICULTURAL} LAND ^{AT (KNIK)} FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOP-
MENT. AGRICULTURE IS THE MAIN ECONOMIC
PROPOSAL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
FOR PORT MCKENKIE, AND IS AN ENFORCEABLE
MSB COASTAL DISTRICT POLICY.

I'VE GOT LOTS OF ENTHUSIASM IF YOU
READY TO ARBITRARILY DENY ME OF MY
DUE PROCESS AND STANDING UNDER
VIII SEC 17 AND 16. AK CONSTITUTION.

AK CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS ARE ENFORCEABLE
COASTAL DISTRICT POLICY.

WHAT IS YOUR LEGAL AND FACTUAL
BASIS FOR POLICY #4 ^{under} ~~AND~~ ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT? THE MSB IS BUT A SECOND
CLASS BOROUGH. ALL SMALL COMMUNITIES
AS WELL AS WASILLA AND PALMER

ARE BUT ONE COMMUNITY. WHY SHOULD A
PERSON NOT HAVE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY
CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE FOR TRANSPORTATION

planning. The chilling effect is Segregation otherwise, AND I hold the DOT&PF Commissioner fully responsible for any further dilemmas coming my way. I have the right to prosper too. I ask the DOT&PF Commissioner for hearings on my Knick ^(RS2477) Agricultural Land and my Chase Agricultural Land. Please timely respond to me in writing. If you can make policy changes affecting me, then you can address the Administrative process as well. Having Federal Approval will require Administrative process. I was wondering how you are going to address it since no statutes explicitly grant you sole authority to make land use decisions. Is DOT&PF trying to over-ride land use decisions. Nothing in Federal Law allows for the over-ruling of land use ~~decisions~~ decisions. See the Clean Air Act (STIP).

I oppose STIP Approval at this point until my issues are addressed, and due process afforded,

3. The Approved PIP has problems under a second class borough as articulated as before. There are no 1st class boroughs in AK.

The Public ideas don't over-ride Factual reality of this restriction of State subdivision.

4. Under system character Policy 2, has problems when mineral entry is being ~~use~~ utilized, AND that includes the surface use ^{for it} ALSO.

Your policy CANNOT over-ride AK property law. ANY TRAK persons suggesting over-riding OF property law for their benefit, better think twice about it. I will pursue legally any person who is foolish to pursue this policy. I ASK FOR NON-FEDERAL APPROVAL OF the STIP, AS YOU KNOW this policy is UNLAWFUL.

Specifically address #1467 ^{RS2477}, AND its alleged impact to lots 3+46L2 SkyLine Estates Subdivision lots.

I dispute ANY RS2477 CLAIM / assertion.

I ALSO remind DOT+PF I AM NOT
Amused to have MSB 'Adopt A TRAILS
PLAN FOR Acquiring A R/O ON
my Amber Lake ^{North} Parcel, which was
bought For Agricultural use / settlement
No means to Address one
community SOCIAL AND economic
IMPACTS WAS utilized.

- 5) Policy 6 Public ~~development~~ ^{envolement}
IS FACTUALLY NOT OCCURRING IN KNICK
region. The issue IS NOT routes
OR their impact. The issue IS the
IMPACT to the region AS A whole.
Further impact to DOT+PF activities
MAY occur, IF DOT+PF doesn't
take a hard look at this issue.
Please respond to me in writing
Addressing this position / issue.
I WANT A public hearing in the
KNICK AREA to address this issue.
I AM NOT KECC member AS they are
A political group NOT A subdivision
of government OF MSB.

(public involvement)
6. Policy 8 (Livability) is by Acquiescence ^{DOT & PF} being followed in Chase AND NOT followed in Knik. So this policy needs explanation why dual standard. It negates this ^{Policy} ~~not~~ being a policy at all.

7. Policy 9 ^{Livability} ~~public involvement~~ CAN only be achieved by consideration of MSB AS one community. Better plan for opposition to continually ^{making} ~~make~~ me displaced or feel displaced, without a valid and concise reasoning. I don't prescribe to desitny, I make desitny happen; to the best of my abilities with ^{LEGAL} enthusiastic attitude, on those individuals who prescribe changes to take away my civil rights AND freedoms.

8. Policy 10 (Livability) is a civil rights provision. You don't strive, you make it happen. So make it so factually. AND enforceably.

9. Policy 11 (Livability) has no means for accomplishment when one community is broken its segments for planning purposes. I oppose this pretty word policy, without a factual basis for its accomplishment.

10. Policy 12 (Livability) is not ADA enforceable when no standing in planning occurs because one disabilities can't be directly ~~dec~~ tied to the planning activity. Only when the effect occurs can it be enforced. See (97219 CU) DOT & PF A Party.

AND policy # 5 (economic development) curtails access to public facilities for disabled persons arbitrarily with no means for further consideration that is not equal to others. This is a segregation policy / enforcement by DOT & PF.

Planning for access for economic development (not defined) and not for access to existing facilities violates civil right laws outright!

11. The word rural is not defined by DOT & PF in Vision 2020 Update. However under Federal Law, MSB is not rural. If you going to Address Federal Law, then you better address this issue.

12. Policy 14 (funding) is impossible to do when no current regional transportation PLAN exists nor A MEANS to Address the social AND economic considerations other than arbitrarily since no LAND PLAN update are being updated AND MSB 1970 Comprehensive PLAN is out of date, with actuality.

I Allege conformity lapse in SIP petition to EPA. (prior)

Vision 2020 update doesn't address conformity implementation.

When no regional assessment for Air Quality exists, nor ^{region} transportation planning, then Air Quality plans are arbitrary AND not factual.

I oppose STIP AND SIP Approval.

13. Since NO ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN under AS 46.03.040 exists, then DOT & PF ASSUMPTIONS ARE purely discretionary AND do NOT FALL under a FACTUAL basis. This VIOLATES CLEAN AIR ACT Citizen Suit enforceability.

14. Vision 2020 update AND STIP utterly fail to address the public at a whole AND thus police power exercise became ONLY political aspirations for Segregation, Fair Housing issues, AND unreasonable risks AND safety issues continuance. The disabled are arbitrarily shut out when no means to address access to public ^{established} facilities is allowed because of community aspirations that in providing them access, will ruin their lifestyles. I know I can't change others attitude, but DOT & PF AND the DOT & PF commissioner are fully supporting this bias AND stereotyping to occur by policy #5. Diverse public views ought not be against access to existing public facilities. I oppose federal approval.

-10-

on grounds these policies further subject certain protected classes of individuals into stereotypes and creates more bias against them and their pursuit of happiness and prosperity.

15. System preservation is not a tea-21 goal as stated. As "preservation of easements" is. AND DOT&PE HAS had no Federal Approval yet, to my knowledge yet. I oppose Federal approval on grounds due process is not afforded, the mineral entry issues unresolved nor ~~can~~ the mineral entry of oil & gas / mining or shallow gas equally considered for transportation AND recreational activities.

There is no basis for these actualities occurring, NOR exemption status under Federal Law AND Federal Approval.

16. INSUFFICIENCY OF notice, LACK OF due process, AND the LEGISLATIVE Acting Qui-judicial to interpret its own Legislation under title 38, SB196 (1986) ^{R10} IS WHY "RS247T" needs Further Addressing before Federal Approval. I OPPOSE STIP APPROVAL.
17. No Adequate means to Address these Issues ^{AND more} exists under State Law. I request Federal Arbitration before Any Federal Approval OF STIP or Vision 2020 Update.
18. The economic consideration Fostering one or Another economic development needs consideration AS NO OVERALL economic PLAN ~~exists~~ EXISTS AND DOT&PP CANNOT SOLEY make.
19. AK COASTAL mgmt Program Allows the Public to participate in All Aspects OF planning. Vision 2020 update AND STIP Implementation is piecemealed in A

Fashion creating insufficiency
of notice, AND meaningless Avenue to
comment or meaningfully participate.

20. No legal or factual basis for
policy ⁽¹⁵⁾ was provided, as thus information
is incomplete. I can't meaningfully
comment AND the process ^{public} is meaningless.

21. I dispute the states process
for eminent domain as corporations
are persons under 14th Amendment,
AND public facilities are not a
political subdivision of the state
as defined in AK constitution.

(this April 2002)
22. Preposed Legislation was taken
by me as threat, that my property
could be taken for the future
without specifics, ~~stated~~ I during
the time frame of public comment on
the SIP AND thus I oppose
SIP Approval AND STIP Approval
on grounds it negates my will to
participate meaningfully in ~~man~~
mandate federal law policy AND law

23. For effective public participation.
The DOT & PF Commissioner says for (letter)
for eminent domain changes its OK, because
its State Law. Acquiescence is why.
Problems that are small to begin
with got larger in time.

24. I give notice to DNR, that I spoke
to (Qui-judical) Legislative Action
this session and have ~~been~~^{means}
to court to address due process
outside ~~the~~^{DNR} administrative decision
on Remote Cabin Staking, as venue,
topic was not dismissed by House
Resource Committee, ~~it~~ simply no
relief provided, to me on my Chase
Hmstds.

25. I give notice that in A Qui-judical
proceeding of the Legislature, (2007)^{April}
ON RS2477 vacation (Legislative)
I disputed DNR claim of RS2477
claim on lots 3+4 bL 2 Skyline
Estates Subdivision, and it was not
disputed by the Legislature, nor venue
denied.

I ASK both of these become part
of ~~this~~ ~~the~~ the FACTUAL record
ON STIP, AND Vision 2020 update.

26. NO Legal Authority For DOT/PF WAS provided
under state LAW

For ~~the~~ ^{Implementation}

OF Vision 2020 update HC-30 Box 5438

AND STIP

Nor policies or

any cmz consistency.

Which I need to comment

on, AS to not be deceived

AGAIN AS in (97219CU) Federal.

Sincerely
Dana Polson
WASILLA, AK 99654
31 May 2002

RECEIVED

MAY 31 '02

→ COMMENTS

on 20/20 PLAN

Regional Director Central Region	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONST. & OPS DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LEASING & PROPERTY MGMT.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HWY, AVIATION & FAC. MAINT.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONTRACTS & PROF. SVC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REG. SAFETY OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LEG. LIAISON & PUB. AFFAIRS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMISSIONER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEP. COMMISSIONER OPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEP. COMMISSIONER ADMIN.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
REGIONAL ADMIN.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REG. PRECON. ENGINEER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DIRECTOR DES.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments on Draft policies for ADOT Vision 2020

BY
Dennis Dooley
3724 Campbell Airstrip Road
Anchorage, AK 99504
dennisdooley@gci.net

Dear Ms. Dilley:

The following comments are my perceptions after reviewing your department's Draft Policies. Everyone should be applauded for this effort. I hope they do not deteriorate to the point where they become too general to have real applicability. My main concern about the document as a whole is that it is too "polly-anish". There are no criteria associated with these policies by which the department can be held accountable. Many of these policies may not lend themselves to goal criteria but many of them do. Although most of the following comments tend to be negative, I wish to make clear my view of this attempt, as a whole is very positive.

Vision 2020 Draft Plan

Pg 11.. System Character 3. **"Bring Alaska's National Highway System up to modern standards."** My concern here is while this appears to be a laudable goal I know from personal experience the efforts the Department made while justifying classifying roads for Interstate Designation, a secondary concern was to ensure Alaska DOT would have the right to designate the appropriate design standards for the effected roads. Otherwise, to qualify for interstate funding would have become a pyrrhic victory with any realized increased funding wasted on national standards which had little to do with how Alaska surface transportation operated. My concern was particularly ignited when I read the discussion on page 14. The following statement amplified what was to be meant by the policy to be **"Fund on an annual basis a program to upgrade NHS routes to national standards?"** I do not feel it prudent with the rudimentary route system we have available in this state, to be considering reducing our flexibility in how we build our roads on the NHS-particularly when the national legislation appears to be offering us the flexibility to use the funds in ways which may be more fitting to our circumstances.

Specific Language recommendation—Strike out all references to "modern or national standards"

Pg 14.. Economic Development **Institute environmental streamlining practices by providing environmentally responsible transportation improvements in a timely manner.. "** My experience with the department in the past regarding delays for project development suggests that the main reason projects were delayed for environmental reasons was not the fault of reviewing agencies. But rather, the fault of inadequate and/or optimistic environmental assessment work by the DOT. This has been a chronic problem for the Dept for many years. When the department wishes to make a project happen.. it just creates an overly optimistic schedule for completion.. and then when there are delays

from the permit process... blame the permitting agencies. After investigating several of these given instances I remain convinced that most of the permitting agencies are doing their job as the public intended. Any perceived delays are primarily the consequence of poor project definition by DOT staff in regard to environmental concerns.

Specific Language recommendation-Strike out “ Institute environmental streamlining practices by providing environmentally responsible transportation improvements in a timely manner...”

The rest of the bullets I endorse. Specifically, the last bullet for this topic which emphasizes my view above **“Continue to work with other state agencies on a project-by-project basis to improve coordination.”** My only concern here is that to leave out any mention of federal agency cooperation is a serious oversight.

Pg 16.. Livability Policy 8 I applaud the statements in this paragraph but remain puzzled by the absence of such efforts to date. AMATS has traditionally been an afterthought in the land use planning effort in Anchorage. Land use planners in Anchorage have little or no concern for impacts their decisions make upon transportation infrastructure. The converse is true also. To build the transportation model in a vacuum AFTER the land use model has gained some consensus, is foisting a charade upon the public. It should be an iterative and interdisciplinary process which calls upon strong ethical constraints and discipline from both sets of planners.

Training classes are indeed important. But not if, they are only to propagate the current methodology. When engineers from DOT are heard in casual conversations at public project hearings “This has nothing to do with land use”, there exists a credibility gap regarding the understanding of the modern paradigm for transportation planning.

Livability Policy 13 Emphasize a definite goal in regards to trailheads and rest stops.
Specific Language recommendation--Trailheads will be developed wherever there is a recognized trail by any public agency abutting state routes given due safety concerns. There will be a rest stop developed in the rural regions approximately 1 travel hour apart.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

DIVISION OF STATEWIDE PLANNING

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

3132 CHANNEL DRIVE
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-7898
PHONE: (907) 465-4070
TEXT: (907) 465-3652
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August 6, 2002

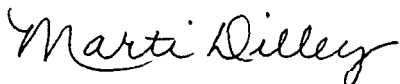
Dennis Dooley
3724 Campbell Airstrip Road
Anchorage, AK 99504

Dear Mr. Dooley:

Thank you for your thoughtful comments on the draft *Vision: 2020 Plan*. We are currently compiling all public comments received and evaluating them for possible revisions to the draft policies and objectives. We will carefully consider your comments on the policies and objectives covering upgrades to the National Highway System, environmental streamlining, agency coordination, land use and transportation planning, and trailheads. We also hear your call for criteria by which the department can be held accountable for following these policies.

I can assure you that one of your comments has already caused us to include "federal agency coordination" in the last bullet on page 14 under Policy 4. We are forwarding your comments on environmental streamlining to the state environmental coordinator as well.

Sincerely,



Marti Dilley, Manager
Statewide Transportation Plan

cc: Jennifer Wilson, Central Region

que

MAILBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

Section One of the draft *Vision: 2020 Update* provides an opportunity for you to see if the department has addressed your concerns in its policies and objectives. You may wish to review Section Two (Resources/Background) and Section Three (Public Comments) before commenting. All three sections are available on our website (www.alaska.gov/vision2020) and from the department on request (1-888-PLAN-DOT).

About this draft plan, the department would like to know:

what do you
think about
the draft
plan? We're
listening

1. Should other policies be added? Should any be deleted? How will these changes help transportation in Alaska?

DOT is not listening to local community. The City of Kodiak has stated that the community does not want "prestige roads" through the City of Kodiak. DOT ignores the request AA-. The current DOT Parks Highway design will choke economic development.

2. Should any of the policies be modified in some way? How will these changes help transportation in Alaska?

Transportation means everything for private sector economic stability. The goal

COMMENTS
NOW DUE
JUNE 14

3. Are the objectives clear and effective enough? Can you suggest changes (deletions, additions, or revisions)?

Please carefully read the attached article. We ask that the article become part of this public record.

4. Do you have other comments on any aspect of this draft plan?

The entire plan is an expansion of the DOT bureaucracy. It is a CYA document that is a waste of resources.

Please detach this questionnaire, fold in half, tape or staple, and place in the mail. Postage has been paid. You may also contact the department through any of the various means noted on the next page. All sections of the plan, including this questionnaire, are available on the department's website.



Tell us what you think. We're still listening!

Not!

As a public agency, we owe it to you to tell you what we're hearing and who we're hearing it from. Information provided to us will be made available to the public.

The Monopoly Road

By Rep. Vic Kohring

Published in the Alaska Contractor, April 2002

As Chairman of the Alaska Legislature's House Transportation Committee for the last two years, I have watched the entire transportation road building and political process unfold before me like a giant blob. Nothing can touch it; nothing affects it. The State Department of Transportation is unique. Unlike other departments which get a lot of publicity and the commissioner is a household name, the DOT - one of the largest agencies in the state-is large, dull, methodical and I'll bet very few people reading this can even name the commissioner.

Yet DOT is vitally important and slugs along. Roads and transportation-related infrastructure are considered a basic function of government. We drive over roads and bridges, use ferries, fly out of airports, and don't think much about it. Taxes pay for them. Yet the Glenn Highway from Anchorage to Eagle River, the 'Parks Highway through Wasilla and the Palmer-Wasilla Highway are all comparable to Winter Olympic luge runs, despite the fact that year after year, the department gets more money to accomplish its job-\$342 million this year alone.

The highway ruts are so bad it's difficult to maintain control of your car. On the Glenn Highway, the "luge run" developed in less than a year and the conditions have now become a safety hazard. Why the ruts formed so quickly is a matter of debate. One possibility is DOT's requirement that contractors use North Slope oil instead of higher quality overseas oil for manufacturing asphalt. This "Alaska preference" requirement creates a lower quality, more malleable pavement. The result is very unimpressive. For example, on the Glenn Highway near Eagle River, resurfaced last summer, it took only nine months for twin "luges" to appear. Someone's making money on this deal, but it's the taxpayer, of course, that loses big.

DOT, like the federal post office, is a classic inefficient government monopoly. Since it has no competition, with a few-minor exceptions it has little incentive to be efficient and provide the best possible service to the public. If you ran a business and your customers had no choice but to use your services because you were the only player in town, you might get a little complacent too. It's the nature of the beast. Such a scenario almost always proves costly to the public, just as when two traffic signal lights were installed on the Glenn Highway in Palmer, costing taxpayers \$1.2 million... ten years ago!

My moles inform me that DOT operates in permanent "slow mode". Because roadwork is seasonal, they do most of it in the summer and early fall. Does it then layoff most of its work force until the next season? No, instead, they create "make work" just to keep them on the payroll for the winter at a high cost to taxpayers. This is good for unions, but it rips off taxpayers.

In too many instances, there are charges of politics edging into the equation. There are two projects in the Mat-Su area with dubious backgrounds that come to mind. Years ago, a country road accessing Hatcher Pass on the Willow side was re-built into a paved, high speed roadway. The trouble was there was only a handful of people who lived in the area, certainly not enough traffic to justify the millions spent. Did an influential politician have connections with the area? More recently, in 1994, at the end of Knik-Goose Bay Road outside Wasilla, an eight-mile extension of road was built and paved, going virtually nowhere. I remember watching a report on Valley News about it at the time. The reporter asked the DOT official on location what justified spending all this money on a road that went to defunct dairy farms at Point McKenzie? The answer was classic bureaucratese. The man talked for a full minute and said nothing.

This phenomenon is not new. Every so often there will be a hew-and-holler for "reform." A new commissioner will be appointed. New methods of management and accounting will be put in place only to have the same old problems crop up like potholes every spring. If the legislature attempts to put DOT on a financial diet, the response is predictable. They'll often intentionally select a highly traveled road, like Knik-Goose Bay, allow it to fall into dramatic disrepair, and then let out the cry, "The Legislature cut our department, and now look what happens!"

So what to do?

The goal is to make DOT a lean, mean, road makin' machine. As customers of the transportation system, we Alaskans must demand the most for our hard-earned tax dollars. The answer is finding new ways to manage how facilities are built and maintained. Since DOT often contracts out to the

private-sector to build roads, why not have them do maintenance as well? That way, if roads aren't kept to high standards, the contract could be canceled and they could be replaced with another firm that would do a better job.

The idea is to create competition. Not just in the area of construction and maintenance, but in a way that creates a real financial interest for companies involved. If construction contractors both built and maintained roads, they would have the incentive to do so in a way where roads would last well into the future. Imagine if the present disgraceful condition on our highways were the result of management of private companies. They'd be run out of town. Not so with a government monopoly. It's like Uncle Jasper who came for a week and stayed for seven years... in the basement. Government hangs around with few new and innovative ideas.

Consider the effect if private entities managed Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. Millions of dollars were offered to expand it, including building a railroad terminal and spur to connect with downtown even though very few, except a small number of big tour operators will ever use it. A private manager would have to ask, "It's great that all of this money is available to spend, but who will pay for the upkeep and maintenance in five or ten years?" If such projects have no objective demand, they should be brought to a halt. My point is, we should not accept federal dollars and encumber future generations with additional costs if a project is not economical, just because money's available.

The principle of competition I've outlined should govern all areas, not just maintenance. If it could be shown there's enough demand for proposed Knik Arm Crossing, then why not encourage a consortium of private corporations to build it and make it preferable with the tolls it would collect? Why do we almost always assume only government is capable of doing this, underwritten by taxpayers? If there were more than one route for motorists commuting to Anchorage, fees would be kept to a minimum because of competition.

The effort to privatize when possible would also keep the costs of the Alaska Ferry System to a minimum. Routes could initially be contracted out on a trial basis, and eventually the entire system could be run privately - the same as air transportation. Of course, the entrenched bureaucrats would strongly object and argue that the "earth would rend itself and the end would soon come upon us." This is to be expected.

We ought to sell the Alaska Railroad outright. No more government infusions of a few million here and a few million there. A government-owned railroad should not compete directly with the private trucking industry, especially with taxpayers' money. It should be a free market process where a railroad earns its way like everyone else. If it fails, entrepreneurs could acquire it and turn it into a profit making entity through competition. No more big, expensive, cumbersome union-controlled bureaucracies.

In every instance I've mentioned, from the Olympic "luges" in our major highways to the political pork at the airport to the railroad and the ferry system, all represent inefficient government monopolies that soak the taxpayer and do not provide the best service possible. That would change with competition. To visualize this, all we have to do is remind ourselves of the last time we painstakingly stood in line at the post office while the same number of clerks helped customers, regardless of how many people were waiting. Thanks to a government-created monopoly, the post office has no real competition with the exception of express mail. If it runs in the red, as it has for over a century, Congress simply steals more from taxpayers to make up the difference.

Compare this with Fred Meyer or Safeway when they become inundated with customers. New checkers and lines spring up immediately as if by magic. Only it's not magic. The private storeowners are keenly aware that if customers are unhappy waiting in lines, they will spend their money elsewhere.

That's the main idea. Government could continue its role as guarantor that roads be built and maintained. But it can also create an atmosphere of competition that will make our roads a pleasure to drive on instead of making it feel like we're competing at the Olympics in the luge event.



MAILBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

The draft *Vision: 2020 Update* provides an opportunity for you to see if the department has addressed your concerns in the policies and objectives. You may wish to review Section Two (Resources/Background) and Section Three (Public Comments) before commenting. They are available on the department's website (www.dot.state.ak.us/) and from the department on request (1-888-PLAN-DOT).

About this draft plan, the department would like to know:

1. Should **any** of the **objectives** be deleted? **How** will these changes help transportation in Alaska?

2. Should **any** of the **policies** be modified in some way? How will these changes help transportation in Alaska?

3. Are the objectives clear and effective enough? Can you **suggest changes** (deletions, additions, or revisions)?

4. Do you have other comments or suggestions for the draft plan?

I would rather have the Uvalchik DOT station open than this draft plan

Dale L Bagley

Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor

Please detach this questionnaire, fold in half, tape or staple, and place in the mail. Postage has been paid. You may also contact the department through any of the various means noted on the next page. All sections of the plan, including this questionnaire, are available on the department's website.

Tell us what you think. We're still listening!

* Follow these links to *Vision: 2020*

- World of DOT
- Plans & Projects
- Statewide & Area Plan
- *Vision: 2020 Update*

As a public agency, we owe it to you to tell you what we're hearing and who we're hearing from. All information provided to us will be made available to the public.

MAILBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

DIVISION OF STATEWIDE PLANNING

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

3132 CHANNEL DRIVE
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-7898
PHONE: (907) 4654070
TEXT: (907) 465-3652
FAX: (907) 4656984

Dale L. Bagley, Mayor
Kenai Peninsula Borough
2 10 Fidalgo Ave Suite 200
Kenai, AK 99611

August 5, 2002

Dear Mayor Bagley:

Thank you for your comment on the draft Vision: 2020 Statewide Transportation Plan. We share your view that the Department's Ninilchik maintenance station should remain open.

For some time now, apart from limited matching funds, no general fund state dollars have supported the planning activities of the department. The Statewide Transportation Plan is one of a number of federal requirements we must fulfill in order to qualify for federal surface transportation funds, and so these planning activities are funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. As you know, federal surface transportation funds cannot be used for snow plowing, pothole filling, sweeping and other general maintenance functions.

It is very unfortunate that our federally-supported activities are adequately funded while state general fund-supported departmental activities are not. You may be interested in reviewing the Investment Analysis section of the Vision 2020 Plan. It makes, we believe, a persuasive argument for adequate state funding of basic transportation needs. This portion of the plan was not distributed in paper version, but can be found on the web at <http://www.dot.state.ak.us>, "Plans & Projects" and "Statewide & Area Plans."

Sincerely,



Tom Brigham
Director